THE LIFE AND DEATH OF Mr. *John Rowe* OF *Crediton* in *Devon.*

Follow me as I follow Christ. 1 Cor. 11.
Whose Faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Heb. 13. 7.

LONDON
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TO THE

READER.

THe Verity *and* Reality *of* Religion *is Exemplified in the* Lives *of* holy men. *Whoever will pleaſe to peruſe the following* Narrative *without prejudice, Two things will appear with great evidence unto him; the one is, that this Perſon, whoſe Life and Death are here faithfully reported, did both in his Life and Death firmly*

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believe Religion *to be a* Real thing, *and lived and died as believing it to be moſt* Real: *The other is, that there was ſome other* Principle *(what ever it was) that carried him beyond the common principles of Humanity, and the higheſt Attainments of the moſt Refined Morality. Both which, if duly conſidered, will plainly Demonſtrate, firſt, that Religion is not a meer* piece *of* Hypocriſie *or an* empty ſhew *without ſubſtance; when as, it is evident that ſome have believed it to be a* Real Thing, *and lived and died as believing it to be ſo. Secondly, this alſo will appear, that there is a* Superior Principle *(beſides thoſe common Principles which are left in Humane Nature, and thoſe Improvements which Morality may advance men unto) that hath acted ſome Perſons. Both theſe Conſiderations confirm the*

Verity

Verity *and* Reality *of Religion. And truly, the more Credit may be given to the Teſtimony of this Holy Man concerning the Reality of Religion, partly, becauſe he was known to have a Capacity, and Abilities of Mind, to underſtand the affairs of the world, and Worldly Intereſts, as well as moſt men; and partly, becauſe he had experimented what was in Religion for the ſpace of Fifty years; and after ſo long experience, when he came to die, gave this Teſtimony concerning it, that it was* no Notion, it was a Reality. *The Memory of this Holy Man is ſtill freſh with many that are yet alive; and, as it is Probable that ſeveral of his Friends and Acquaintance may remember many Remarkable Paſſages concerning him which are not here inſerted, ſo they may poſſibly meet with ſome things in this* Narrative (*eſpecially ſuch things*

as relate to the more inward Part of his Life) which they were not acquainted with before. What ever benefit any may receive by the Publication of this Persons Life, it is earnestly desired that all the Glory may be Ascribed unto God, and nothing Attributed unto Man.

THE

THE PREFACE.

HAving by a friendly violence, prevailed, that the ensuing Relation, which has for more then ten years space been confined unto privacy, should now be exposed to publick view, I cannot but conceive my self in duty obliged, to usher it into the world with this Preface, thereby to declare mine own just sentiments, grounded on personal observations, touching the Spirit and Life of this great Saint here Characterized. And indeed, to speak the truth, I find it no difficult matter to ingage my Pen, in a task so pleasing to my Spirit; especially considering how much the Notion, but how much

more the Practice *of Christianity is banished out of the world; yea, may we not say from the* Hearts *and* Lives *of too many great pretenders thereto? O what a deluge of Atheism is as it were in a few years broken in on us? How many* Professt Atheists, *yea, whole* Societies *of that* Profession *are there? And what is the main design of such, but to perswade us, that Religion is but a* Blind *of* Hypocrisie, *or a meer* Notion *without* Reality *? Yea, to come nearer home, how much* practical Atheism, *(which is a Monster worse then Speculative) is there to be found even among the Professors of Religion? What contradictions are there in mens lives to the Faith they profess? How disagreeing are the Actions of many Professors, from the principles of their Profession? And how much is the holy Name of the great God hereby blasphemed? Oh how far do the lives of*

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Profeſſors now adays come ſhort of that Purity, Simplicity, Heavenly-mindedneſs, holy conference, and Activity for God, which ſhone, with ſo much luſtre and Beauty, in the Chriſtians of the foregoing, and beginning of this Age. What a great Teſtimony did they give to the Religion they profeſſed, by the Sanctity and Piety of their Converſations? How much did they both demonſtrate and adorn their profeſſion, by the Integrity of their Actions? For men are more apt to believe our Works, than our Tongues; our Deeds *have greater efficacy to perſwade, then our* Words: *A good Life is the moſt potent demonſtration of good principles. Exemplary viſible Piety is, not only moſt Beautiful, but alſo moſt efficacious, to beget the like diſpoſition in thoſe that behold it; as alſo to take off thoſe prejudices, which ill-minded men take up againſt the ways of God. Theſe and*

ſuch

ſuch like contemplations, have made me the more preſſing and importunate, to get the following Narrative made publick; thereby to give check to the growing Atheiſms, both ſpeculative and practical, of this Age; as alſo to let profeſſors ſee, what raiſures in exemplary Godlineſs have been attained unto, and they likewiſe ought to aſpire afte.

But to detain thee no longer in the Porch *of this Sacred Temple, I ſhall give thee a little* Image *of this holy man, whoſe Life and Death is more fully related in the following Story.* Crediton *in* Devon, *was anciently very famous, by reaſon of ſome eminent perſons who have been born or ſeated there. But what adds more to its honour upon the trueſt and beſt account, then that Mr.* John Rowe *lived and died there? What a bright and Influential Star was he? How accute, ſolid, judicious,*

judicious, and comprehenſive was his Intellectual capacity? What a great meaſure of prudence, as to civil affairs, was he endowed withall? How publick-ſpirited was he, as to the good of the place where he lived? How many Controverſies and Law-Suits, did he by his happy interpoſure and mediation, prevent or end? Oh! what a publick good was he to poor Crediton, *and the parts adjacent? How free hearted, and ready to aſſiſt thoſe that needed either Advice or Relief? Was not a conſiderable part of his time, ſtrength, and eſtate laid out for the good of others? And Oh what an univerſal eſteem and Affection did he hereby gain from all, even the worſt?*

As for the inward frame of his Spirit, he had a deep inſight into, and feeling acquaintance with the great myſtery of Faith and Godlineſs. His Light was not meerly Notional *or*

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Traditional; *but* real, distinct, *and* affective, *derived from the Father of Light. The self denial and Humility of his Spirit was very illustrious in the whole of his life: Oh, how much would he abase self, and magnifie free grace in all the good he received or performed? Albeit he was filled by God with great measures of grace, yet how empty was he of self-fullness? The more gracious God was to him, the more vile he was in his own eyes: Was not self-love greatly swallowed up in and by the sense of Gods love to him? What delight did he take in concealing that grace which was conferred on him, under an humble self-abasement before God and men? He lived, the most that ever I knew any, in a continual separation, not only from the world, but also from himself. He seemed to me to have arrived unto the greatest abjuration of self-sufficiency that ever I met with.*

Oh,

Oh, how much did he depart from himself day by day, that so he might more intirely enter into and live in Christ? What a generous design had he to abandon every part, not only of sinful *but* legal *self, for Christ? But yet the less he lived in the Spirit of his own Gifts or Graces received, the more he lived in the Spirit of Christ his head. Oh, what an amorous union with, and value for Christ did he gain by the Ruines of self-love? The less he was in his own eyes, by so much the more did he magnifie Christ? His works did praise him, but how much did his tongue, heart and life praise Christ? Yea, how much did he rejoyce to see Christ glorifyed by others, as well as by himself? I must confess according to my best knowledge, I never knew any that did more cry down self, and cry up Christ, than this now*

glorified

glorified Saint. How willing was he to render unto Christ, whatever he received from him? Thus, as the Rivers receive new supplies by emptying themselves into the Sea; so did this holy man by returning the acknowledgement and improvement of all his grace unto Christ the Ocean of all. As Humility kept him low in his own eyes, so Faith raised in him an high esteem of Christ. As he went unto Christ for all grace, so he ascribed all unto him. Thus he made Christ all in all. *He seemed so laborious in the ways of Godliness, as if there were no Christ to trust unto; and yet he was so much in Faith and dependance on Christ, as if there were nothing to be done on his part. As for his diligence in the work of God, that he ascribed to Christ; but as for any negligence he was guilty of, that he ascribed to himself. His will stood strongly* Bent *for God.*

God. Oh! what a pure, ſound, ſingle, entire, upright heart for God had he? How did Divine Love bend his will, & purifie the intention thereof, keeping it in a firm adheſion unto God? What ſpiritual Affections for Chriſt, ballanced with ſaving light, was his heart poſſeſſed withall? How much did he fear God under Smiles; love him under frowns; hope in him under difficulties; deſire and enjoy him under all other enjoyments? What a beautiful Harmony was there between his will and the Divine Will? Yea, how much did he live, and die, in the Soveraign Will? When the Lord took from him any dear Relation, what a correſpondence with, and Acquieſcence in his royal pleaſure did he diſcover in his deportment? How Paſſive *yea* Active *in concurrence with the will of God, was his will under all chaſtiſements? How little covetuous or thirſty after his own will*

will was he? Oh, what a flexible, humble, meek, and broken will towards God was there discovered in him, and yet lo! how inflexible and stiffe was his will as to whatever had the appearance of evil? how patient, calm, and submissive was he in his own cause, and yet what an ardent zeal had he for the concerns of his Lord? How much could he condescend to the will of the meaneſt for their good; and yet how little would he stoop to the lusts of the proudeſt?

As for the constant establisht tenor of his Spirit in walking with God, not only in Religious dutys, but also in his civil Affairs, I have much admired it: Yea, I cannot but tell the world, what I have oft mentioned in private, that I verily believe, this holy man enjoyed more of God in his civil employments, then many Chriſtians

ſtians do in their ſpiritual Retirements and Devotion. I have taken him when newly come' of a croud of ſecular affairs, and have found him more ſpiritual in his converſe, then I find the moſt of Chriſtians after their moſt ſerious exerciſes in religious worſhip. And, I remember he then told me, (what I hope I ſhall never forget) That this was his courſe every day, to examine what had been Gods carriage towards him, and what had been his carriage towards God. *A Golden Rule for* Heart examens. *Oh, what an eſtrangement from a worldly Spirit, had he in all his worldly concerns? How were his Thoughts, Principles, Inclinations, Affections, and Actions, moulded into a fit frame for walking with God? Was not this the main buſineſs and exerciſe of his Life? How much time did he ſpend in the ſervice of his Lord; and how little was he taken*

taken up with ſelf-concernments? What a ſerious lively affectionate communion with God had he, not only in, but alſo out of duties? How much was his end ever in his eye? And with what vigorous activity did he purſue the ſame? How much was his heart with God, in eating, walking, commerce, and all parts of civil Converſation? What a curious vigilant eye had he on his Spirit, to ſecure it from all violent paſſions, and irregular motions? How unwilling was he to let paſs the leaſt occaſion preſented for receiving, or doing good? How little was there of a Vacuum *in his Life, for tentation to fill up? What an equal uniform, and harmonious life did he lead?*

In ſum, He was one of an Univerſal Spirit *for Godlineſs: The Yoke and Croſs of Chriſt were pleaſant*

ſant and familiar to him. Oh, how ſtrict was his life, but his heart large towards God and men? How much did he vindicate the Reality of his Religion, by living at a more than ordinary rate in Religion? It was his great Aphoriſm, both living and dying, That Religion was a Real thing: *And how much did he demonſtrate the ſame by the power thereof in his life and converſation: What an Heaven of Holineſs and Happineſs did he find in his way to Heaven? What a Tranquility of Spirit did he arrive unto in this inferiour world? Was not his life, by reaſon of the equality of its parts, like a circle, which every day began and ended in God? What a conſtellation of graces ſeemingly contrary, did there ſhine forth in his Converſation? How knowing in the deep myſtery of Faith, and yet how humble was he? What a bleſſed mixture of*

zeal

zeal and meekneſs appeared in him? What a Majeſty mixed with a ſweet Affability was there in his preſence? How much did he advantage men that knew him by giving them ſuch a bright ſhining example of viſible Godlineſs? I would not exceed in mine eſteem of perſons or things; but yet, I muſt confeſs, I cannot but admire the grace of God that ſhone ſo illuſtriouſly in this eminent Saint: And I think, I may ſay it without injury to truth, or perſon, that to my beſt remembrance, I have not ſeen any one clothed with more viſible and ſhining grace, then this Holy man, whoſe Life and Death thou wilt find Characteriſed in the following ſtory: The memory of whom I truſt will ever be as a living Sermon to me, and ſuch as had the priviledge of converſe with him.

As for the Relation here given of him, by my Dear Friend, I muſt beg

beg this favour of thee, that thou wilt not paſs thy judgment till thou haſt read the whole, and ſeriouſly conſidered the ſame; and then, I am apt to perſwade my ſelf, thou wilt conclude with me, that thou haſt here offered to thy View, a grand exemplar of Real Viſible Godlineſs, which deſerves thy ſerious attention and Imitation.

Theophilus Gale.

THE
Life and Death
OF
Mr. *John Rowe.*

John Rowe, the Son of *Lawrence Rowe*, was born in the Pariſh of *Shobrook*, in the County of *Devon*, in that famous year 1588. When he was an *Infant* he was ſet aſide in his Cradle for dead, but it pleaſed God to put it into the heart of one of his Siſters, who had a little more ſpirit and reſolution then the reſt had, to reſolve with her ſelf, that ſhe would go and look upon him once more; hereupon coming to the place where he lay, and putting her hand to his mouth ſhe apprehended ſhe felt a little breath; being incouraged by his, ſome means were immediately

His Birth and Infancy.

uſed, ſo that he began to revive, and the Lord was pleaſed to reſtore him to life who had been given up for dead, intimating (as it were) by this ſo *Early* and *Signal* a *Providence*, that he had reſerv'd him for ſome more then ordinary uſe; and this the Courſe of his life did abundantly ſhew.

His Education.

After he was come to ſome years, he was ſent by his Parents to the Grammar-Schoole in *Crediton* (an antient Town in *Devon-Shire*) where he attained to ſuch Proficiency both in the *Latine* and *Greek* Tongues, that he was well nigh ripe for the Univerſity, and had accordingly been ſent thither in order to the *Miniſtry*, but that it pleaſed God to take away his Father a little before the intended time; ſo that the intentions which his Parents had of training him up for the *Miniſtry* could never be accompliſhed. Thus the Lord, in his Wiſdome, was pleaſed to take him off from that, which others, by conſidering what his After-

After-Life and Abilities were found to be, would have judged him moſt meet for. So that we may hence learn (to uſe an expreſſion of his own) how that *We do often erre in our judgements of things, and that God ſees not as men ſee.* Being fruſtrated in the hopes he had of going to the *Univerſity*, he did not however looſe that little Learning, the School had afforded unto him; only the *Greek*, thorough diſ-uſe, was ſomewhat worn out with him; but he ſtill retained ſo exact a knowledge of the Latine Tongue that it was of great uſe to him, unto his dying day.

His Parts.

For his *Parts*, He was of a *Sharp* and *Pregnant Wit*, of a *great*, *deep*, and *Penetrating Judgement*, he himſelf was wont to complain of ſome deficiency in his *Memory*, but that defect appeared more to himſelf, then it did unto others; for others judged him to excell in that, as well as in other Abilities of the Mind.

His Natural Temper.

As for his Natural *Temper* and *Diſpoſition*, he was a man of great *Ingenuity*, of much *Candor* and *Sweetneſs*, thoſe that knew him moſt intimately, thought him to have as *Noble* and *Generous* a Soul, and to be as far from any thing that ſavoured of a *Baſe*, *Ignoble*, and *Sordid* Spirit, as ever any that they knew. He was exceeding *Affable* and *Courteous* unto all, and that without the leaſt ſhew or ſuſpition of ſeeking his own ends by it: His temper led him to be moſt ſweet and kind unto all, and there was not the meaneſt perſon that could ſay he was neglected or deſpiſed by him: He was very careful to give a due reſpect unto all, and no one was ever more *curious* to pay a *juſt Reverence* to thoſe that were above him in *Rank* and *Quality*.

His Behaviour,

In his *Behaviour*, he was moſt *Humble*, *Sweet*, and *Converſible*, as ready to *hear* others ſpeak as to *ſpeak* himſelf, and he would for the moſt part give them leave to ſpeak, before

before he would be forward to ſpeak himſelf. His Natural Temper was ſo ſweet and amiable, as that there was ſcarce any that knew him but loved him, and honoured him. And this (together with his Grace) was elevated to ſuch a *pitch* as that there was not the worſt of men that had any thing to ſpeak *evil* of him.

The mixture of Authority with his Natural Sweetneſs.

And yet (that which is not common, but is ſomewhat a rare conjunction) although his *Natural Candor* and ſweetneſs were ſuch, yet he was a man of a great *Preſence*, and of great *Authority:* He was ſeldome known to ſpeak in any *ſerious Matter*, but his ſpeech carried a wonderful, and peculiar kind of *Authority* with it. And there was ſo great a *Majeſty* in his converſation as that ſome (and thoſe who were reputed both wiſe and godly beholding the *Excellency* of his ſpirit, the *Luſtre* of his graces, and how much his *Converſation* differed from the moſt of men) have profeſſed that when they were in his Company, they

The Luſtre of his Converſation.

have had an Awe left upon them, & could not be ſo *free* whilſt they were in his Company, as when they were amongſt others.

But the main thing which this *Narrative* is intended for, is to ſpeak of his *Grace*, and to ſhew what that Eminency in Holineſs was which the Lord brought him unto. And this, if the *unworthy Relator* may have but the happineſs to expreſs and delineate as it was in him the *Original Copy*, he doubts no tbut the *Life* of this *Holy Man* will prove a *Pattern* as worthy of our *Imitation* as any this *Latter-Age* hath produced. And if any thing ſeem to be defective in the life of this Holy Man the Readers are to be intreated, not to impute it ſo much to the *defect* of *worth* or *merit* in him (for as much as all that knew him intimately, do unanimouſly acknowledge that there was much more in him than could eaſily be expreſſed or declared by any) but unto want of skill in that *Hand* which

which undertook to draw his *Picture*, and to give the *Character* of him which is here represented.

Now that we may proceed in order, we shall begin with the first *Rise* of the work of God in his Soul and afterward see what *Progresse* it made, and to how great a measure and pitch of *Holiness* the Lord brought him, in the conclusion.

When he was but young, and of *tender* years, his Parents did (according to their measure), instruct him in the Grounds of Religion, and did also cause him carefully with themselves to frequent the *Publick Ministry* in the Congregation, and by this means he came to have the first *Tastes* and *Relishes* of Religion in his heart. When his Father was dead, Mr. *Rowe* went from his Mother to live with Doctor *Bodley* (brother to the famous Sr. *Thomas Bodley* founder of the *University Library* in *Oxford*) a man of *Eminent Piety*, and *Exemplary Holiness*, and who was then the *Minister*

The beginning of the Work of Grace in his heart.

Minister and proper *Incumbent* of the place where Mr. *Rowe* was born, and his Parents lived. From this *Holy man*, and *Eminent Person* for *Sanctity* Mr. *Rowe* learned much, and very much of the work of God upon his soul must be attributed to him, as the *Instrument*, and as he learned much from him, so he was not a little beloved by him, the *Doctor* bearing as tender a respect to him, as if he had been his own Child. Living thus with Doctor *Bodley*, and afterwards for a season with another *Gentleman* (*viz.*) Mr. *Thomas Gale* of *Crediton*, (who also was a godly man) Mr. *Rowe* had opportunity frequently to go to *London*, where he heard some of the ablest *Preachers*, and such as were then most in *Reputation*, as Dr. *Gouge*, Mr. *Stock*, and others, and by them he was much helped forward in *Spiritual Knowledge*, and quickned in his *Love* to the ways of God: But Doctor *Bodleys* counsels, together with his Holy Example

(he

(he being a man of an *Auſtere Life* and of a moſt *Strict Converſation*) ſeemed to be that which had moſt *Influence* upon him, and to leave the greateſt *Impreſſion* on his heart; for nothing was more familiar with him throughout his whole life, then to be ſpeaking upon all occaſions what he had *ſeen* and *heard* and *obſerved* in him. The Sermons alſo and Preaching of Doctor *Bodley* was of great uſe to him; for this was Mr. *Rowes* obſervation concerning him, that whatever the Subject were the *Doctor* had been treating of, yet ſtill when he came to the Application, the uſe he would be ſure to make of it, ſhould be to *drive men unto Chriſt.* This Doctrine was ſo rivetted into Mr. *Rowe* and had ſo deep a *root* in him, as that all that knew him intimately muſt ſay this of him, that they never knew any that was a greater *advancer* of *Chriſt* or did more inculcate this *great Principle* upon all that he was called to ſpeak unto. *viz.*

That their main Care ſhould be to deny themſelves and to live upon Chriſt for all.

As for a more *particular diſcovery*, what were the firſt workings of God upon his heart, it was expreſſed by himſelf in a *Paper* of his own writing, in this manner as followeth: Having before in the ſame *Paper* related the mercies of God towards him, and his care and providence over him in his infancy and childhood, he adds.

"Neither did my gracious God "ceaſe to do me good in the days "of my youth: whereat I may juſtly "admire; Oh the depth and Riches "of his unchangeable Grace! for "here were I able to ſet out the true "Idea of my then deformed heart "and life! But better it is to con- "feſs the ſame to my gracious God, "and to pray him not to remember "thoſe ſins of my youth; both "which I have done, (*viz.*) both "confeſſed them and begged par- "don of them, and by Gods

"Grace

"Grace intend to do to my dying
"day.

"Yet thus much I think fit to
"unfold for the praiſe of the glory
"of Gods Grace that, whereas, I
"was by nature prone to all ſins,
"of all kinds, eſpecially to thoſe
"two monſters, Pride and Volup-
"tuouſneſs, and in the latter of
"theſe an inventer of new kinds of
"ſinning; yet the Lord gave
"me not up to mine own hearts
"luſts altogether: But even then
"began not only to reſtrain me,
"but alſo by the means of Grace
"to do me good. O Lord, my ſal-
"vation is of thee alone; for if ever
"any ſhould be ſaved by their own
"merits, very likely was it that
"I ſhould have been fartheſt off,
"for thou reſiſteſt the proud. But
"the gifts and calling of God are
"without Repentance: Hence it
"came to paſs that the ſame gra-
"cious God (who out of his un-
"changeable Love ordained me to
"Life) ſtirred up the Spirit of

Doctor

" Doctor *Bodley* to admoniſh me
" to take heed of my pride and
" thoſe over-weaning conceits of
" my ſelf which he eſpied in me, and
" counſelled me to buy a *Bible* and to
" read the ſame: which Admonition
" and counſel the Lord was pleaſed
" to bleſs, in ſuch wiſe, that Ever
" ſince that time, I have in ſome
" weak meaſure kept a conſtant
" courſe of reading the Scriptures,
" except ſome few ſhort intermiſſi-
" ons, by which means I do acknow-
" ledge to the glory of my God, that
" my poor ſoul hath received no
" ſmall benefit.

By this *Relation* of his own which was written with his own hand (together with ſome other paſſages of his *Life*, which hereafter are to be inſerted) it appears that *Pride*, and the *Love* of *Pleaſure* were his *Maſter-ſins* in the days of his youth. Hence was it that he would often ſay in his familiar diſcourſe that *Luſt*, *Pride*, and *Pleaſure*, were the great ſins of youth. He would alſo very

very frequently ſpeak of this Paſſage, that there was but *one thing* which he mainly deſired in his *youthful days*, which if it had been granted to him, would have proved to be his *ruine*; and that was, that he might have had the ſame *Liberty* allowed unto him by his Parents, which another *vain young-man*, whom he knew, had granted unto him, who afterward came to a *Miſerable End*. This paſſage he would mention often, to ſhew what a mercy it was that he was ſo *reſtrained*, and that God gave him not his own Will.

After the Lord had thus begun his good work in Mr. *Rowes* heart by the *counſells*, *preaching* and *holy converſation* of Doctor *Bodley*; he continued in the Doctors Family for ſome time, which was as long as Dr. *Bodley* lived. The Doctor after ſome experience of him, perceiving his *Ingenuity*, *Fidelity*, and *Inclinations* to Religion, bare a very great and tender *affection* towards him, and ſuch was his affection, that

that he having no child of his own, intended (as was verily ſuppoſed) to have done much for him at his death: But the *Doctor* being ſurprized with ſomewhat a *ſudden Sickneſs* (whereof he died) and not being able by reaſon thereof to do what he intended, Mr. *Rowes* hopes were wholly fruſtrated of enjoying any thing that the Doctor purpoſed to do for him. And this event he looked upon (as he was wont ever after to conſtrue it in his familiar diſcourſes with his friends) as the *Wiſe Providence of God towards him, that he might ſee his whole Dependance to be on the Lord for what he had.*

His Marriage.

About the *Twenty fifth* year of his Age he was diſpoſed of in *Marriage*, concerning which becauſe there were ſome Providences that were remarkable, and that he himſelf thought worthy to be remembred (as it appears by the *Regiſter* that he kept of them) we ſhall relate what himſelf hath written.

"When I was deſirous to enter "into

"into the State of Marriage, I was
"assayled with Covetousnes, Vo-
"luptuousnes and Ambition, and
"would surely have undone my
"self by some, or all of these Evills,
"had not my gracious God, by
"disappointing my unsanctified de-
"sires for *seven* years space or more,
"prevented my Folly.

"Oh what a misery is it for vain
"youth to have its will! Oh what
"a blessing to bear the yoke betime!
"especially when God will open
"the Ear to discipline, (as blessed
"be his Name) he did mine at the
"last. And here I may justly break
"out into admiration of the Riches
"of his Grace, that brought light
"to me out of my darkness, I mean
"a great Light of Grace into my
"Soul, by occasion of the great
"Darkness of mine own sin, into
"the which I fell. My Pride went
"before my fall, so sin drew on sin,
"and sin was punished with sin; yet
"(O depth of Grace) this Fall was
"the cause of my Rising, I mean
in

" in Grace. Thus my gracious
" God did me good by mine own
" Evils, and made my greateſt ſins
" occaſions of my great Humiliati-
" on. And although Voluptuouſneſs,
" Ambition and Coveteouſneſs,
" were the Idol-ſins of my youth,
" yet my gracious God preſerved
" me from the groſs acting of thoſe
" ſins, either by Murder, Adultery,
" Fornication, Theft, or any other
" unlawful way of Gain: I ſay
" that it was my gracious God that
" preſerved me, and therefore let
" his name have all the Glory: as
" for me, I ſhould have run *Mad*
" in Pride with *Nebuchadnezar*, and
" *burſt aſunder* in Coveteouſneſs
" with *Judas*, and *drowned* my ſelf
" in a daily courſe of Delicacy with
" the Glutton that St. *Luke* men-
" tions, had I not been kept by the
" power of God alone: Only, only,
" to thy name O Lord, be the
" praiſe.

" My deſire of Marriage was cor-
" rupt through my Coveteouſneſs,
Volup-

" Voluptuouſneſs, and Ambition, as
" I have ſaid, and my gracious God
" croſſing thoſe unſanctified deſires
" of mine for divers years, did at
" length teach me to deſire Marri-
" age for better ends: And having
" begun to ſet my mind in order,
" he alſo brought on the bleſſing; for
" firſt he prepared my heart to
" ſeek him by Prayer for a meet
" helper, and then he opened his
" Ear, and granted my requeſt;
" ſo that even in the ſame day
" wherein he had ſtirred me up in
" a more then ordinary manner to
" ſeek a bleſſing in my Marriage by
" Prayer, he was pleaſed to give me
" evidence that he had heard me, in
" ſending to me an *honeſt Chriſtian,*
" which came to me on purpoſe, to
" break the matter for Marriage
" with her, which afterward God
" gave me to wife.

" This match Satan attempted
" to hinder, by ſtirring up a neer
" friend of mine to fail in perfor-
" mance of his promiſe made to me
for.

" for my preferment: which juſtly
" might have alienated the minds
" of my wifes parents from me, but
" that my gracious God would not
" ſuffer Satan to do me that miſ-
" chief, yea more then ſo, he gave
" me grace to ſeek reconciliation
" with that Friend of mine which
" had ſo deeply wronged me.

So far are the words of his own *Relation* written by himſelf. The Family into which he matched, was a Godly Family, who did the ſooner imbrace Mr. *Rowes* motion, becauſe of that which they had heard concerning his *Affection* to Religion. The perſon whom he took to Wife, was a very godly and ſincere woman, although one that *walked* in *Darkneſs* and had no aſſurance of Gods Love the greateſt part of her days; and that appears by this *Paſſage*, which we may not therefore omit, becauſe Mr. *Rowe* himſelf hath *Regiſtred* it, as one ſpecial experience of Gods Love towards him. When his wife lay *Sick*, and

was

was upon her *Death bed*, ſhe complained that ſhe had no *aſſurance* of the Love and Favour of God, and that when ſhe died ſhe ſhould be taken to *Glory* in Heaven: hereupon Mr. *Rowe* beſought the Lord very earneſtly for her, and the Lord was ſo far intreated as a little before her death, to aſſure her of her *Glory* in heaven, and this in ſomewhat an *unuſual extraordinary* manner, giving in ſuch a ſecret Hint and Intimation to her ſoul as this, *I will Glorifie thee.*

After Mr. *Rowe* was Married he continued four years in the houſe of his *Father* in *law* at *Pinhow* in *Devon.* a *place* (as himſelf hath recorded it in the Memoriall of his own experiences) *enriched with divers worldly contentments, but all embittered thorough the want of the Miniſtry of Gods Word.* And what he adds in the ſame place, may not be omitted. "There (ſays he) had I juſt occa-
"ſion given me to repent of my
"former fulſomneſs and wearineſs
of

"of that heavenly Manna. But "here again my gracious God that "never ceaseth to do me good, did "as well provide the Plaister as "give the Wound. He wounded "my Conscience by the want of "the Ministry in my own Parish "of *Pnin*, bringing to my remember-"ance my sin in undervaluing the "plentiful Ministry which I had "once enjoyed: but he healed the "breach again, not only by for-"givenes and repentance, but also "by providing for me the Ministry "of a worthy servant of his in a "Neighbouring Parish.

His remove to *Crediton*.

But to proceed in the *Narrative* of his Life. Mr. *Rowe* being weary of living any longer in the house of his *Father* in *Law* by reason of the want of the meanes of grace in that place (although, as hath been said, he enjoyed at least for a season (for how long it was he had that happines, the *Relator* hath not come to the knowledg of) the labours of a faithful Minister in an

an adjacent Pariſh) and hearing that there was an able *Preacher* at *Crediton* he had a great deſire to remove his Family and Habitation thither, and accordingly did ſo; taking his leave of his wives *Relations*, he went and ſetled himſelf and family in *Crediton*, on purpoſe to enjoy the *means* of grace; and there continued to his dying day: And according to this *example* of his own, he would often exhort his *children* and *acquaintance* that their *firſt care* ſhould be to place themſelves under a *Godly* and a *powerful Miniſtry*; and for this purpoſe he would often mention that text, *Go forth by the footſteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beſides the Shepheards tents.* Can. 1. 8.

His Executing the office of High-Conſtable.

Not long after his coming to *Crediton* he was made *High-Conſtable*, in which *office* he continued about *Twenty years*; during which ſervice, his *care*, *diligence*, and *zeal*, was ſuch for the ſuppreſſing and puniſhing of *Vice*, that his *Name* became

became a *Dread* and a *Terror* to all the *Prophane* that were near to the place he lived. And as his *zeal* was great, ſo his wiſdom, *Charity* and *Compaſſions* were no leſs; he would firſt ſeek to win Offenders by his *loving counſels*, and *gentle admonitions*, before he would uſe the *ſeverity* of the Law againſt them; and his great care was to let men ſee that it was their *Vices*, not their *Perſons* that he aimed at. And ſuch was the *Preſence* of God with him, ſuch the *Authority* and *Majeſty* that ſhone in his carriage and behaviour, that although he was forced to puniſh many for their miſdemeanors that would not be otherwiſe reclaimed, yet none had power to lift up an hand againſt him, or ſcarce to move their tongues againſt him to his hurt or prejudice. One inſtance was remarkable.

A certain Ruffian being puniſhed by him for his miſdemeanors, vowed the next time he met him he would certainly ſtab him, and being put

put into the Stocks for ſome offence he had committed againſt the Law; his rage was ſuch, that not being able to have his will on Mr. *Rowe*, he ſtruck at the ſtones with his knife for very madneſs. After this Mr. *Rowe* met the ſame perſon when he was at liberty, and might have had opportunity to wreak his malice and revenge upon him, but it pleaſed the Lord ſo to overpower him that he was as a man ſtruck dumb and had not a word to ſay.

His Modeſty.

Many of his friends ſeeing his abilities and fitneſs would often ſollicit and preſs him to take the office of a *Juſtice* of *Peace*, but ſuch was his *Humility* and *Modeſty*, that he would by no means yeild to it, ſaying that he had neither *Ability* nor *Eſtate* for it, and that it was *the way to make Authority contemptible when inferiour Perſons were put into ſuch Places*. He was very careful to cut off all *occaſion* of *offence* from ſuch as would be ready to take offence; being wont in his *younger* days

His care to cut off occaſions of offence.

days to uſe Shooting with *Bow* and *Arrows* for his *Recreation* ſake; after that, meeting with an *Offendor* againſt the law, he rebuked him for ſome miſdemeanours that he was guilty of, the man replyed why might not he do that as well as he Shoot with *Bow* and *Arrows*: after this Mr. *Rowe* laid aſide his Recreation, and would never ſhoot with *Bow* and *Arrows* more.

H's Peaceable and Peace-making Diſpoſition.

He was a man of a very *Peaceable* temper, he never loved to foment differences, but ſought all he could to compoſe them and if there were at any time any diſtance between him and others, the fault was uſually theirs, becauſe he could not bear or comply with ſome corruption of theirs, but would ſeek their reformation. And as he was of a very peaceable diſpoſition himſelf, ſo he was a great *Peace-maker*; a great part of his time was ſpent this way in making up and compoſing of differences between others, many a quarrel was taken up by him this way,

way, many *Law Suits* prevented, many differences between near relations reconciled, and the Lord was pleaſed to give him ſuch a bleſſing and ſucceſs in theſe undertakings, that his hands were ſeldome empty of this work, ſo that he was many times ſo much ingaged and taken up in the buſineſſes and affairs of other men, that he could hardly get liberty to mind or proſecute his own. He ſaid, upon occaſion given him, to a relation of his that he might have increaſed his own eſtate much more, if he had ſpent that time in following his own affairs which he ſpent in the buſineſſes and affairs of other men, but what he did in this kind he did it out of duty and Conſcience. Such indeed was his *Charity* and *Compaſſion* to others, that none ever was known to be more *Concerned* for others, or more *Naturally* to care for the good of others then he was; He made their *Conditions* his own, he had a deep Sympathy with their diſtreſſes, and

in his Prayers he would as affectionately pray for them as for himself; and when he had undertaken any of the affairs and businesses of other men, he would act as *vigorously* in their behalf as if it were his own concernment, although he neither did, nor expected, to reap any advantage to himself by it.

His Assurance.

He was *forty years* of age before he attained that great blessing of *Assurance*, which he kept ever after, and never lost it after he had once attained it; so that he enjoyed that singular priviledge *viz.* the *assurance* of the love of God for the space of *Thirty years* and more; The means by which he maintained and preserved his assurance was (as he himself said) *by a diligent and constant use of all the means of Grace both publick and private, and taking an account of his heart once at least every day*. And as he had by these means, a constant assurance of his estate, so that he was never left to a total doubting of his estate, after he had once

once received the assurance of it; so he had at some times more special experience of the *Witness* and *Testimony* of the *Spirit* together with that of his own *Spirit.* Concerning which *particular*, because the children of God do naturally desire to have all the light that may be given in about it, (it being a secret and hidden thing, and unknown to any but those that have it, and the experience of the most holy men being in this case most considerable, and that upon which the greatest weight may be laid) I shall set down a little more at large the *thoughts* and *experience* of this holy man about it. In one of his *Letters* he thus expressed himself. *Besides assurance in a way of reasoning, God is pleased some time in conversing with him to make it out, by secretly hinting in some one precious promise.* And in another *Letter* he expressed himself more fully. *In answer to your desire, to receive a few of my thoughts and experiences concerning the*

His Judgment and experience concerning the Testimony of the Spirit.

witneſs or Teſtimony of the Spirit in aſſurance.

I do acknowledge (to the glory of God) that God hath given to me ſome experience of his love (and at ſometimes more then at other times) in the Teſtimony of his Spirit bearing witneſs with my Spirit concerning mine adoption, and ſo conſequently of my juſtification, ſanctification, and eternal life: But this is better felt then expreſſed; yet in ſome meaſure as the Lord ſhall inable me. I will endeavour to anſwer your deſire herein. Firſt that there is (as appeareth Rom. 8. 16.*) ſuch a bleſſed Priviledge given to ſome of Gods elect on earth, as to have the Spirit it ſelf to bear witneſs with their Spirits that they are the Children of God.*

Again, that this Teſtimony is given to believers after that they are effectually called to grace, as appeareth Eph. 1. 13. *and by the which they are (as by a ſeal) aſſured of the grace of God. But that every one that is effectually called to grace, hath this Teſtimony preſently*

presently given, I dare not affirm, but do rather think that some may wait a longer time then others before they do receive it; for mine own part I believe that I was effectually called divers years before the Lord gave me this assurance.

Again, the truth of this Testimony of the holy Spirit in my own soul, I have discerned from false flashes, and unsound comforts by this, that this testimony doth alwaies when it comes raise the soul to more desires after more intimate union and communion with God; works more self-abhorrency, and more care to please God, and fear to displease him, and (in a word) drives me nearer to God, whereas false flashes leave the soul loose.

Again, for the continuance of this blessed testimony in the soul, I do find that an holy humble constant waiting on God, and Communion with him in his ordinances, joyned with a constant care and endeavour to walk with him in uprightness in all the duties of my particular calling and relations are bless-

ed means to keep up and increaſe this aſſurance; but the neglect or remiſſe uſage of theſe doth diminiſh the oyl of this bleſſed Lamp; and unſanctified liberty ſo far grieves the holy Spirit as to ſuſpend this Teſtimony for a time.

What the nature of this witneſs of the Spirit, was he ſaid, (as it is in the precedent letter) that it was better *felt* then *expreſſed*, only being once *asked* about it, he anſwered, *It was a ſecret overpowering, that I am his, and he is mine I am my well-beloveds, and my well-beloved is mine.* He was wont to obſerve that the moſt likely means to attain aſſurance was to propound ſpiritual ends to our ſelves in the deſiring of it; not to deſire it meerly that we might be at quiet, and free from trouble in our Conſciences, but principally to deſire it for this end, that by the knowledge and apprehenſion of Gods love to us, we might be inabled to give the Lord the glory of his own grace, and be carried out

to

to higher pitches in obedience. In his diſcourſe with ſome friends he had ſuch a paſſage: *There may be a great deal of ſelfiſhneſs in ſeeking Peace; I find it beſt when I am come to the greateſt heights of peace, to ſtudy my duty, what it is that God would have me do, and to follow him there, otherwiſe I meet with a Cloud.*

His manner was (as hath been partly hinted before) to make up his accounts every day, and the method that he uſed in his meditation, was to conſider *what God had done for him in the day, and what his carriage had been towards God*: and he would ſay when he conſidered what Gods carriage had been to him, there he ſaw that God had been doing him good in a *conſtant tenor*; but then when he reflected upon himſelf, there he ſaw many failings: and he ſaid *there was ſo action done by him that was ever no good, but there was ſome circumſtance or other that he ſaw himſelf imperfect and defective in:* and it was a remark-

able ſpeech of his: *I have accounted it a great pitch when the Lord hath ſhewed me ſome defects in my beſt actions, that I may go clean out of ſelf unto Chriſt.* By this daily and conſtant exerciſe of his in reviewing his life and actions every day, he kept and maintained much *Peace* of *Conſcience*; and this was one of the great things that God did for him, that uſually at the cloſe of every day, after the caſting up of his accounts, & humble and fervent prayer, the Lord made it out to him, as he himſelf expreſſed it, that *All was pardoned.* In this way was he carried on, until at laſt he arrived to as great an *habitual perſwaſion*, and as conſtant an apprehenſion of the love of God as any hath been known to have attained in this latter age, ſo that he walked in the *light of Gods countenance* from day to day; and his way was to ſtudy and contemplate the love of God towards him in every thing; and much of his Prayers ran this way, that his faith might

might be strengthned to *see and behold the love of God* in all the passages of his life, that so he might (as *Abraham* did) give the Lord *glory by believing.* Therefore he would often expres himself in *Prayer* after this sort: *Oh that we might behold thy infinite and eternal love constantly, so far as finite creatures are capable that the apprehensions of thy love might draw us up again to love thee.* And he would say, *We are apt to take notice of some of the greater and more remarkable passages of the love of God; as, if the Lord gave us some great deliverance, or gave us some signal answer of Prayer, or bestowed upon us some special blessing which we had much desired; but our Heavenly father did not only do us good in these great things, but he was still doing us good in a constant tenor even in the least things.*

His fear of loosing assurance.

And as the Lord did much for him in this kind, so he was very jealous of loosing this blessed priviledge, *viz.* the sense that he had

of the love of God and the *light of his countenance* which he walked in. There were two things, he ſaid, that he mainly deſired of God; the one was, that having been a *Profeſſor of Religion ſo long, he might be kept from ſcandalous ſins*: The other was, *that God would not hide his face from him; for he ſaid he was a man of a low Spirit, and without Gods preſence he could not ſubſiſt; and therefore (ſaid he) I ſaw it neceſſary to be kept under affliction that I might be humble, for God would not reveal himſelf to proud ſouls.*

His Comforts.

Beſides this *habitual peace and aſſurance* which he enjoyed, he had many particular comforts from the Lord at ſeveral times and upon ſeveral occaſions. He ſaid there was great familiarity between God & his people after they had walked much with him. When he lay down to reſt at night he had uſually that promiſe ſpoken over to him, *Fear not Abraham I am thy ſhield and thy exceeding great and rich reward.*

When

When he had been desiring such pitches of holiness, he had often such hints as these are, *I will satisfie thee*; When he was under any special afflictions he had some special comforts and supports from God; When the Lord took away his *first* wife, he was troubled in himself about the disposing of his children; then the Lord comforted him thus, *They are thine but for a time, but they are mine for ever*, and this he said *satisfied* him. Another time having been exercised with a fit of the stone, he wrote to a near Relation thus: *These are to let you know how fatherly God dealeth with us, though afflicted yet not forsaken; that which sweetens all my afflictions is that inward peace which the Lord is pleased to give me in all my outward pain.* Many more instances of this kind might be produced. When he was in any special *strait* or *difficulty* and needed counsel and direction what course to take, the Lord did always *first* or *last* (after earnest seeking

The Answers he had to prayer.

ing of him) make out his way unto him. He never ſought God in any great affair or extraordinary concernment but he had ſome anſwer or other from him; he was ſure always to have this general anſwer that *God would do him good*, and that he would order things in the *beſt way*, and often times he had more particular intimations of the mind of God. The Lord did alſo many a time give him ſecret hints beforehand of what he was about to do, as afterward came to paſs according to the tenor of theſe Scriptures: *the ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him. And, ſhall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do.* When any great thing was approaching relating to himſelf, his family, or the Church, he had uſually ſome warning and intimation from God beforehand concerning it; one time he was obſerved to be very ſad, and in his diſcourſe he would ſay that God had ſeemed to intimate to him as if ſo be that he intended to make

The Diſcoverieshe had from God conceruing future events of Providence.

Pſal. 25.
Gen. 18. 17.

make ſome change in his family: whether this intimation were for *trial* or no, and the Lord intended to *moderate* him to theſe *earthly comforts*, or whether the Lord intended indeed to take away ſome one of his Family, either himſelf or ſome other (he ſaid) he would not determine; however he made this uſe of it to ſet himſelf and his family in order: not long after the Lord took away a near Relation, which proved a great affliction to him: and long before his own change he had many clear intimations of it; and other inſtances might be given (and ſome that were more rare and extraordinary) but that it may not be ſo meet to mention things of this nature, foraſmuch as ſome poſſibly might make an ill uſe of them: For indeed this we may ſay of him, although the Lord did many extraordinary things for him, and things that were not uſual or common, yet he did not *expect* them, neither did he (as *Luther* ſomewhere ſpeaks

of

of himſelf) *indent* with the Lord that he ſhould give them unto him, much leſs would he boaſt of things of this nature to others. He was content with the *plain*, *naked* word, he was a great *magnifier of it*, there all his ſtudy and delight lay, as will appear more hereafter: and although he met with many extraordinary things in his own experience, yet he ſpake of them very *ſparingly*, and to a very few. And this he did (as he ſaid) partly to avoid the occaſion of *Spiritual Pride* in himſelf, partly leaſt *weaker Chriſtians ſhould be diſcouraged who had not attained to what the Lord had done for him, and partly that ſuch who never knew what belonged to ſuch things, might not make a ſcoff of them when they heard them.*

His Excellency in Meditation.

He was a man much in *Prayer* and *Meditation*, as for *Meditation*, the Lord gave him a *ſingular Ability* that way; and this made him a *wiſe* Man and a *wiſe* Chriſtian: he would

would ſeldom give an anſwer in any ſerious matter but he would firſt *pauſe* a while; and he would ſay, he ſhould account it a great happineſs, if when ever he were to ſpeak in any ſerious matter, he might have the liberty, or could remember with himſelf, to muſe for a little ſpace.

He was much delighted in a ſaying of Dr. *Preſtons*, and did often mention it, that the *greateſt Muſers were the beſt Artiſts.* He was ſo much taken up in Meditation that he often found himſelf ſpent by it, and he would ſay that Meditation was a *ſpending* thing. Before he roſe in the morning he would ſometimes lie meditating an hour or two together: If he were riding or walking (if he were not ingaged in company and diſcourſe with others) he would ſtill be in ſome contemplation or other. If he were going about ſome worldly affair, he would firſt contrive his worldly buſineſs, and then he thought he might be

at

at the more liberty, and would reſerve the reſt of the time that he had free for Meditation of ſome Divine matter. He ſeldom prayed in ſecret, but he uſed ſome meditation before, and it was a memorable ſpeech of his, that he preferred a *ſhort Prayer after long Meditation before a long Prayer without Meditation.* —— When ever he had heard a *Sermon*, he ſpent a conſiderable time in meditating of what he had heard: And he would ſay, if he might be in ſuch places where he might have opportunities to hear more frequently, he ſhould not like it ſo well to hear much, unleſs he could have liberty to digeſt it by Meditation. In meditating of the things he heard, he would diligently look into all the texts that were quoted in the Sermon; and for this purpoſe would often mention that famous inſtance of the men of *Berea*, whom the *Holy Ghoſt* taketh notice
Acts. 17. 11. of to be *more Noble than thoſe of Theſſalonica*, for this very cauſe,

becauſe

becauſe they ſearched the Scriptures daily, whether thoſe things were ſo. This way of Meditation helped him greatly, inſomuch that by a diligent inquiry into the Scriptures that were quoted, and muſing upon what he had heard, he was carried much farther ſometimes then what the Preacher himſelf touched upon; and when he came to repeat the Sermons in his family (according as his manner was to repeat moſt of the Sermons which he had heard; he always repeated both the Sermons on the Lords day, and that on the Lecture day, and many others which he heard occaſionally) having Medi·ated on them beforehand, he would clear up thoſe points that had moſt difficulty in them, or had been more darkly delivered; and if the Preacher had been of meaner parts and guifts, and the things which had been delivered might not ſeem ſo uſeful, he would ſo explain and illuſtrate that which others apprehended the Preacher defective

His way in repeating Sermons.

defective in, as that the Sermon was always rendred profitable in his repetition of it. After the repetition of the Sermons on the Lords days, he was wont to call his children and ſervants to an account, of what they had learned and could remember of the things that had been taught them; When he found any that had been careleſs in treaſuring up the good word which they had heard, he would reprove them, and admoniſh them for their negligence, and ſhew them the danger that they were in by neglecting, or not profiting by the means of grace; When he found any that were more forward and apt to remember the things which had been taught them, he would commend and incourage them, and he would often inculcate that ſpeech of our Saviour, *To him that hath ſhall more be given, but from him that hath no ſhall be taken away even that which he hath.* And although he was a man of great *Authority*, and when there was

was occaſion, would ſpeak with mighty Authority, yet when he came to diſcourſe with his children and ſervants, about the things they had learned, he would expreſs a great deal of familiarity, condeſcending in a familiar way to the meaneſt of their capacities, and thereby inſinuating himſelf into their affections, begetting a love in them to the word, and taking opportunity thereby to make things more plain and eaſie to their underſtandings.

His frequency in Prayer.

He was much and often in Prayer, beſides his exerciſes, in ſecret and in the family (of which we ſhall ſpeak hereafter) He oftentimes prayed with his yokefellow alone, and if any great occaſion had fallen out in the day, he would ſtill retire himſelf to ask counſel and a bleſſing from the Lord: Once every month he always kept a private day by himſelf (beſides what he did upon particular occaſions) to ſeek the Lord by faſting and Prayer, the better to prepare

prepare himself for the Lords-Supper, and then also he had much upon his heart the concernments of the Church. And if ever any affliction befel him, or his family, or any of his relations, his constant course was to seek the Lord in an extraordinary manner. So likewise if there were any great business he was to undertake, or any more eminent strait wherein he needed Divine counsel, providence, and protection, he still set apart some time to seek God in a more then ordinary manner, and his success was answerable, for he had always some gracious return or other; Besides the set times of Prayer which he observed, he was full of occasional ejaculations; He was seldom known to be out of a spiritual frame, and in that frame his heart was darting up one holy ejaculation or other. He was most punctual in keeping his times and seasons for Prayer, reading, and Meditation; Whatever his worldly businesses were

were (which were ſometimes many and weighty) he was very loth to abridge himſelf in his wonted courſe for theſe exerciſes, and if he were neceſſitated at any time to be ſhorter he would be ſure to redeem the next opportunity to regain what he had been deprived of. He was wont to ſay *when he did haſten over holy duties out of an over eager deſire to follow his worldly buſineſs, he did many times meet with a croſs in his buſineſs, but when he did take his ordinary time, God did make his other buſineſs to ſucceed the better, or elſe his mind was brought to ſubmit to the will of God.*

His great Affection in holy duties

He was ſeldom known to pray himſelf, or to join with others in Prayer, but his heart was much affected, and carried out with much holy *zeal* and *fervency*; In his old age his heart would melt frequently, and he would often be diſſolved into tears, and his affections ſeemed to be as green and vigorous as the affections of young Converts

verts uſe to be. When he joined with others he was far from an *oſcitant* and *careleſs* carriage. His behaviour was ſo *reverent*, and mixed with ſo much affection, as that the Miniſter under whoſe Miniſtry he ſate, would profeſs he found himſelf very much helped and quickned by the obſervance of his affection: If at any time he found the leaſt decay or deadneſs coming upon him, that was his greateſt trouble, and far more then any outward affliction. In one of his letters he expreſſed himſelf thus; having ſpoken before in his letter of a bodily diſtemper that lay upon him, he goes on thus, *That which troubleth me now is the diſtemper of my Spirit becauſe I find my ſelf leſs lively in holy things, and more unactive then formerly. Yeſterday (bleſſed be God) I found ſome reviving.*

His private Exercises in the morning.

When he awoke in the morning, if it were before the ordinary time he was wont to riſe, his manner was to ſpend ſome time in meditation

tation, and the ſubject of his Meditation for the moſt part was ſomewhat of the great work of *Redemption*, and he imployed his thoughts principally to meditate on the eternal *ſacrifice* of the Lord Jeſus, which was offered up to the Father for the taking away of the ſins of his people; and according to this his own practiſe he would counſel his children, *every Morning to take a turn at the Croſs of Chriſt, and to think of his ſufferings, and that would be a means to make them love Chriſt the more.* When he was riſing, and dreſſing himſelf in the morning, he would let fall ſome holy inſtructions or other on them that were about him: After he was ready, his firſt work was to retire himſelf into his cloſet where he ſpent a conſiderable time in reading, Meditation and Prayer; His daily practiſe was to read every morning ſome part of the Scriptures with ſome commentarie thereupon, and after that, to meditate on what he had

had read, and being much taken with the Spirituality and Judiciouſneſs of *Calvins* expoſitions he made the greateſt uſe of him to help him in the underſtanding of the Scriptures.

His morning exerciſes in the Family.

After he had thus finiſhed his private exerciſe of Prayer and Meditation on the word he had read, he was wont to call together his family, and communicate unto them what he had learned from his own meditation, and the expoſitions of godly Divines on the word that he had read; and what ever his worldly occaſions had been, he would ſcarce ever omit this exerciſe with hisfamily, but every morning would open ſome portion of the Scripture to them, and give them ſome holy exhortation from it; and this was his practiſe for 20 or 30 years together; Such was his modeſty and humility in the managing of this work, that although he was of a great Judgment himſelf, of long experience and had a deep inſight

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into the things of God, yet he would ſay he would not take upon him to interpret the meaning of ſuch or ſuch a text, but he would acquaint them what he had learned from godly Divines. By this conſtant courſe of reading, and daily peruſing the expoſitions of Divines, joyned together with his own Meditation he became a man expert and mighty in the Scriptures: So that when he came to ſpeak to his family he would open the Scriptures with much clearneſs and ſolidity, and the Lord endued him with a wonderful ability to make things plain and familiar to the capacity of the meaneſt. And when he came to make applications of things to thoſe of his own family, he would be ſure to conſider what every ones condition did require, thoſe whom he feared to be ſtill in the ſtate of nature, he would lay open to them the danger of their condition, and what a ſad thing it was for them to

remain out of Christ; and whatever the matter was he had been speaking of, his exhortation would be sure always to center in this to press them to look after Christ, in whom the Father had laid up all grace, and from whom they must expect to receive all grace. His exhortations were set on with a wonderful strange authority; there was so great a presence of God with him, that many (besides those of his own family) who came occasionally to be in his house, will have cause to bless God for him to eternity.

After he had spent a quarter of an hour or a little more in this way of exhortation, he would close up the mornings exercise with prayer, in which he would not be long, but his prayer was so substantial that he would comprehend the whole of Religion (and as it were a body of Divinity) in a short Prayer. His prayer seemed to be nothing but digested meditation and

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that acted by the Spirit of God. Hardly one expreſſion cou'd be ſpared, every paſſage had its weight. He never uſed a form, but the ſubſtance and materials of his Prayers were for the moſt part the ſame, though he ſtill took in the other neceſſitys of his family as the providence of God gave occaſion: Some that have heard him pray have thought they never ſaw grace acting more purely then in his prayer; his prayer ſeemed to be the pure language of grace rather then of nature or of parts. The main ſcope at which his payers was levell'd was the glory of God; he was ſtill carried above himſelf to eye the glory of God, and therefore the ſtream of his prayers would uſually run thus, *Lord glorifie thy ſelf in our ſalvation, glorifie thy ſelf in beſtowing this or that grace upon us.* The matter of his prayer was ſtill commenſurate to the word, what the word required as duty from Chriſtians either in relation to

their general or particular callings, or in relation to the various providences they might be under, that was ſtill the matter of his prayer. One thing he was moſt eminent in, he had a very large and comprehenſive Charity, he would ſtill take in the concernments of the Catholick-Church, and he would be ſure to pray for all the election where ever they were. Once he was obſerved to let fall ſuch an expreſſion as this in prayer, *We pray thee pardon the ſins of thine here, and every where, and thoſe that ever ſhall be.*

His evening exerciſes.

In the evening before Supper if he could obtain any liberty he would ſpend ſome time in reading the works of ſome eminent Divine: He took moſt delight in Dr. *Preſtons* Books; and he had been ſo converſant in them that moſt of the eminent paſſages in his writings became very familiar with him; after that he betook himſelf to his conſtant courſe of Prayer and Meditation

ditation. After Supper he would cauſe his children and the young ſchollars that were in his family (of which he was never without ſome for many years, who were ſent to the Grammar-School and were placed by their Parents in his family to enjoy the benefit of his inſtructions and holy example) to read each of them a Chapter one by one: when this was done he would call together the whole family, and then he would ſpend the reſt of the evening in Catechiſing of them, or elſe in Repetition of ſome Sermon that had been preached on the week day.

His Care in keeping the Sabbath.

When the *Sabbath* was approaching his care was to prepare for it, and he would endeavour ſo to order his worldly affairs, as that he might have diſpatcht his buſineſs in ſeaſon, and ſo have the more liberty in the evening to ſet his heart in order for the duties of the *Sabbath*. When the *Sabbath* was come, he would ſpend moſt of the morning in ſecret

prayer and meditation; and he was wont to be ſhorter in the mornings exerciſes with his family upon that day, then at other times, that ſo they might not be hindered from the publick ordinances. His care was to be at the beginning of Publick worſhip, and he was wont to ſay it was more fit that they ſhould wait for the Miniſter, then that he ſhould wait for them, and he would often mention that example & ſpeech of *Cornelius We are all here preſent before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* When the morning Sermon was done, the little time he had before dinner he would ſpend in peruſing his notes of the Sermon, and meditating on what had been delivered; as ſoon as dinner was ended, he would repeat the Sermon to his family: after that was done, the time of publick worſhip in the afternoon drew on, then he would haſten to the Congregation; when publick worſhip was ended he would firſt ſpend a con-

Acts 10.

conſiderable time in ſecret, the reſt of the evening was ſpent in the repetition of the Sermon that was preached in the afternoon, and calling his family to an account of the things they had learned.

His eſteem and reverence of godly *Miniſters* was exceeding admirable; if a *Miniſter* had been never ſo mean, and of never ſo low parts and gifts he would ſhew a ſingular reſpect to him, and according to his own example he would be moſt frequent in this exhortation, to exhort his children to have an high eſteem of the *Goſpel Miniſtry*, and he would often preſs upon them that paſſage of our Saviour, *He that heareth you heareth me, and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me; and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me*: He would alſo mind them of that paſſage of St. *Paul*, *that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing is of the word of God.* He was wont to tell them that God could (if he had pleaſed) ſpeak to us himſelf

The high eſteem he had of godly Miniſters.

immediately, but the Lord condescended to our infirmites, and chose to speak to us by men like our selves, and to this purpose he would often bring the instance of *Cornelius*, the Lord could have spoken to him himself, or caused the Angel to speak to him, but he bids him send for *Peter* and he should tell him what he ought to do. He could not endure that any should account the *Ministry Antichristian*, and he would upon all occasions vindicate the Authority of the *Gospel-Ministry* against those that would impugne it, and he would say, *unless we do firmly believe the Ministry to be the appointment of Jesus Christ we cannot so profit by it as we ought to do.*

He would say it was lawful for us to covet the best gifts, if we might enjoy them, but we must not despise the meanest: he said, *when you come to the Ordinance, the business is between God and you, and whether the instrument be of meaner*

or

or of greater parts, yet this is the portion that God will give out: He likewise said that *there was not the meaneſt Sermon that ever he heard but the Lord did him good by it.*

Another paſſage which he let fall was very remarkable, *When I meet with a Sermon that doth not like me, I firſt look into my ſelf to ſee if there were nothing amiſs there, and if there were no fault there, I would then ſcan it over again.* He would ſay *we many times blame* the Miniſter when as the fault is our own that we have not prayed for him as we ſhould have done. His love to the word was ſuch, that although there were two Miniſters in the place where he lived which ſupplyed the Lords day, and a lecture once in the week, yet even in his *old age* he wouldride ſix or ſevenmiles to enjoy the benefit of the *weekly-Lecture* that was at *Exeter.*

His deſires were carried out much in order to the Converſion of ſouls; there was ſcarce a prayer

His deſire of the converſion of Souls.

that he made, but he would pray with great affection for thoſe of his family, and all others that belonged to Gods election that were yet uncalled in, in all his exerciſes in his family his main drift lay that way, he would ſtill be ſpeaking ſomewhat that might make them ſee their need of Chriſt, and the main thing he would preſs upon them was that they would labour to get into Chriſt, and to make ſure of Chriſt.

His Compaſſion toward ſuch who were under temptation.

He was very tender and compaſſionate to them that were under temtation and diſtreſs of Conſcience, & ſeveral that were under trouble of mind did reſort to him, and ſome did abide in his family for a ſeaſon the better to enjoy the benefit of his prayers and counſells, and the Lord was pleaſed ſo far to hear his prayers and to bleſs what he ſpake to them, as they went away with more Peace and ſatisfaction,

His own temptations.

And as he bare a tender reſpect to others in their temptations ſo he

he was not without his own temptations; it is true, his assurance touching his *estate*, that remained firm and unshaken. Once indeed (he said) in a *sickness* he had a very strong assault from the Enemy but it was but short; the temptation was, that he was an *Hypocrite*, and all that he had done was in *Hypocrysie*; hereupon the Lord put it into his heart, that suppose it were so, yet now he *should cast himself upon the grace of God in Christ, and immediately* the temptation vanished: but though he had not many assaults of this kind, yet he was not without his other temptations. The great temptation that he complained of in his elder years was *Infidelity*. A year or two before his death he complained to a near Relation that he had been troubled with temptations that were very grievous and bitter to him, and the temptation was, whether there was such a one as *Christ* or no, and whether there had been such

actions

actions done by him: the next morning after the temptation had been upon him, these words were dropped into him, *I was Crucified for thee, I have shed my blood for thee,* this brake and melted his heart exceedingly, that when his temptation was of so grievous a nature that the Lord should so condescend unto him, and when he spake of it, he spake of it with *Tears.*

He had also several other *Conflicts*; insomuch that he once break out into this expression, *Oh it is hard keeping up until we come to heaven it is hard fighting.* Another passage he had to this purpose, *Before we receive the Crown we must strive and finish our course, temptations will arise, but blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the Crown of Life.* He saidhe had been ten yearsstriving against one corruption, and at last the Lord brake the neck of it. Another time he said I have been striving against the *height* of my Spirit

these

theſe *forty years.* And as he had his inward conflicts ſo he was ſeldom without ſome outward *trial* or *affliction*: He ſaid it was one of his *exerciſes every morning, to expect what God might try him with in the day, either afflictions or temptations*: and he had another paſſage to the ſame purpoſe, *I thought I had undergone many trials, ſo that now I might hope to be quiet, but ſtill the Lord provided ſome new.* In a Letter of his to a near Relation, he ſaid that *his life it was made up of mixtures of incouragements and difficulties*: In the ſame letter he adds, *I do think it may be much conducing to the glory of God and to our advantage if we ſtill expect ſuch mixtures, knowing that we are thereunto appointed, and that ſo we may in every days ſucceſs intreat the Lord for grace ſuitable to our infirmities and neceſſities: whereas if we ſhould limit the almighty to have our wills ſatisfied, we may diſpleaſe him, and create croſſes to our ſelves.* And as he was ſeldom with-

His Afflictions.

The benefit he had by affliction.

without some exercise of affliction or other, so his afflictions were of singular use to him, he said *when ever he was out of the way, the Lord shewed him clearly that he was so, and that this or that was not right*; and usually he did it by affliction; and this was one of his experiences which was remarkable, *he said, he never had any Chastisement in all his life but the Lord had shewed him some miscarriage by it.* His afflictions made him pray much, and that was his constant course, when any great trial or affliction befell him, to set a part some time to seek God in an extraordinary manner: His great prayer when he was under affliction was, that he might be made *partaker of Gods Holiness* by it. When his family had been visited with the smal-pox, he said, he had been mightily stirred up to pray that this *Visitation* might end in the *Reformation* of the family, and that they might set to the work of God with all their might, and this was usually

uſually the fruit of all his afflictions to quicken him to more activity in the ways of God. When one of his relations had been ſick, he wrote thus to him, *Truly I perceive the Lords mind is to wean us from the world and from ſelf; now the Lord accompliſh the good pleaſure of his will in us to the utmoſt that we may cleave unto him wholly and fully by the wiſdome and ſtrength of the Lord Jeſus in us; be not diſmaid at your afflictions God will turn them to good.* A few years before his death the Lord was pleaſed to try him, by ſuffering his houſe to be on fire; this fire happened on a *Saturday* night about ten of the Clock in the night, his family being the moſt of them in bed, and himſelf aſleep: Being awakened out of ſleep, by ſome that firſt deſcried the danger, and called upon him to ariſe for his preſervation; the firſt thing that the Lord put into his thoughts was that in the *midſt of Judgment he would remember Mercy*, and the Lord

Lord was pleaſed to anſwer his prayer eminently, for only his out-houſes were conſumed, and his dwelling houſe was preſerved, which yet was joyning with the other, and in an apparent danger but that the providence of God was wonderfully ſeen in its preſervation, many of his friends, and neighbours, and of the poor people of the town came to his aſſiſtance in this time of diſtreſs, and though all his goods were removed out of the houſe, and thoſe which were poor and neceſſitous might have taken ſeveral things, yet ſuch was the love and reverence which the people of the place did generally bear to him, and the experience they had of his Charity and readineſs to do them good, that there was not one that had a heart or an hand to take any thing that was his, but all his goods that were carried forth were preſerved intire, without ſo much as the loſs of any one thing: but this did not comfort him

him so much, as that the fire was quenched so seasonably, and things so soon set in order by the help of his friends as that he and his family had the liberty to attend upon the Ordinances the next day, and to keep the Sabbath according to his wonted manner. This affliction of the fire he attributed to the neglect of a duty in not putting away a servant (whom he had often admonished but was not reformed) having had thoughts and resolutions often of putting him away, but being *slack* in performing his duty herein he conceived that this was the reason why the Lord so corrected him. Another time when the Lord had made some *breach* upon his *estate*, and he had suffered a considerable loss, he said *the Lord had shewed him, that if he leaned too much upon these things he would, take away all.* At another time he speaking concerning afflictions in the general he had this expression, *for mine own part I do acknowledg to the*

the glory of God that our only wise God and heavenly father hath taken the best course with me, Oh how lazy had I been and worldly, if the Lord had not hedged up my way, but blessed be God that will not suffer me to live after the flesh.

His observing God in all his Providences.

He was very *apprehensive* of the least mercy, and a *curious observer* of every passage of Providence. When his house had been in danger of being set on fire at another time; and writing of it to a near Relation, he expressed himself thus, *the Lord make us really thankful, and teach us to render for all mercies and deliverances, especially for that great deliverance from wrath to come, and for the hope of eternal life which God that cannot lye hath promised.* Much of his walking with God lay in this, he was very curious to observe the least *check* or *rebuke* from providence in every thing that befell him; and if he met with the least cross he would presently go and humble himself before the Lord and

and pray that he might understand his meaning in it.

His great *Scope* and *design* was, that he might *glorifie* God in the whole course of his conversation, he studiously watched and observed all opportunities for that end; and his great prayer was that where ever he came he might either do *good* or receive *good*: And he would pray that we might not only *glorifie* God, but that we might *glorifie* him *intentionally*. And as this was his prayer, so all that conversed with him, did easily perceive that this was his design; he did not speak of the things of God *customarily*, and because others did, but if opportunity were not offered, he would seek it to fasten some good discourse upon those that were in company with him before he parted from them. The *Minister* that preached at his *Funeral* had this passage concerning him, "The general Bent and Bias of his "Spirit was toward God and to-

The Constant design he had to glorifie God.

"wards

"ward his name, the very quinte-
"ſence of his Spirit was carried that
"way, and that intenſively and
"conſtantly; I did never obſerve
"in him, that ever he intended
"any thing more, or minded any
"thing ſo much as the glory of
"God; did you converſe with him
"about worldly affairs he would
"reduce you by little and little to
"ſome heavenly diſcourſe, there
"would all the lines of his Cir-
"cumference center. His humi-
lity indeed and modeſty was great, if he were in the company of godly Miniſters, or others that he took to be his ſuperiours, he would firſt wait to ſee whether they would ſpeak any thing for edification, if he perceived them to be ſilent or more ſlack, he would endeavour to ingage them in good diſcourſe, or elſe before they parted would ſet it on foot himſelf. And if he had been long in company with others and nothing had been ſpoken to edification, it was a great trouble

trouble to him. When he ſpake of the things of God, he ſpake of them with great *Majeſty* and *Authority*; he was ſeldom known to ſpeak of the things of God, but the *weight* of the things he ſpake of was upon his Spirit, and he ſpake as a man that had his heart wholly taken up in them, Religion and the things of God were become as it were *natural* to him; and look what vehemency of Spirit and intention of affections others do diſcover in the proſecution of their other affairs, the ſame did he manifeſt in the *ways* of God; his heart was ſtill affected when he ſpake of the things of God, and as he was *affected* himſelf, ſo he did for the moſt part *affect* others: When he ſpake by way of *counſel* or *reproof* to any, he would chooſe as much as might be to ſpeak in the words of Scripture, that ſo (as he ſaid) they might *rather hear God ſpeaking then hear him ſpeaking*, and ſo conſequently what was ſpoken might carry

carry the more authority in managing of *reproofs*, he would use great wisdome and compassion, his great care was to order his reproofs so that it might appear he did no way aim at the disgrace of the person that was reproved, but only at his reformation, and his Souls good. And as he was a faithful reprover of others, so he loved reproof himself, he often said *he had met but with one in all his life that would be so faithful a friend as to tell him of what he apprehended to be amiss in him, and he loved him the better for it all his life.*

His Heavenly mindedness.

He was very eminent for his *Heavenly mindedness*, and his *Heavenly affections*, it was one of his familiar prayers, *that our conversation might be in heaven, whilst our dwelling place was here on earth.* And as he prayed so he lived: he said, *Methinks I look upon all the things of this world as Pictures of things in the other world.* At another time he had a speech to this purpose, *Surely, if God*

God ſhall be all in all hereafter, the leſs we have to do with the creature here (more then needs we muſt) the more like we are to that life. Another time he ſaid, *I am aſhamed very much ſometimes that I ſhould delight in the creature ſo much and delight in God no more.* One time when ſome of his children were coming to viſit him, fearing out of his *godly jealouſie* leſt they might be tranſported too much with a meer natural and carnal joy, and not make that heavenly and ſpiritual improvement of their meeting, he writes thus to them before their comming, *When Moſes and Elias appeared in glory at the glorious tranſfiguration of Chriſt in the Mount, the talk they had* (as St. Luke ſaith) *was touching the deceaſe of Chriſt, which he ſhould accompliſh at* Jeruſalem; *and we among* (other things) *may thence alſo learn that it is an heaven-like diſpoſition in midſt of all our earthly enjoyments to think and talk of our departure hence: And as I write this to you, ſo I ſpeak of it*

here

here that both you and we may mingle our meeting here on earth with such thoughts and discourse as may mitigate the present bitterness of any afflicting providence, and may contain our Spirits in an even temper by the expectation of that uninterrupted and eternal joy that we hope one day to enter into when we shall meet, never more to be separated. In another of his letters he expressed himself thus, *We have but an inch of time on earth, and then we enter into eternity; Oh then let us pray continually, effectually, fervently, that our way may be right, and our hearts upright to the finishing of all his wills in duty according to our relations unto all well-pleasing.*

The Tenderness of his Conscience.

He was a man of a very *tender Conscience*, sensible of the least *slip* and *failing*, and though none was ever known to be more *Charitable* to others, and to make a more *Charitable construction* of what was done by others, yet none was ever

ever more *ſevere* againſt himſelf, or more curious to eſpy the leaſt *ſinful defect* or *irregularity* in himſelf; when he perceived the ebullitions of *pride*, *ſelf-love*, *covetouſneſs*, *infidelity*: When he ſaw the leaſt *mixture* of *carnal* and *ſelf-ends* in his *good actions*: When he obſerved how *prone* he was to be byaſed by *man-fearing*, and *man-pleaſing* (as he expreſſed it) from his duty; This was an inexpreſſible trouble to him, and he would bewail theſe things with more bitterneſs then many are wont to do their groſſer ſins: If he had at any time unawares and of a ſudden ſpoken (although others it may be apprehended it was not ſo) an *uncomely word* as he thought, unſuitable to the *gravity* which he conceived became him as a *Chriſtian*, he would bewail it greatly, and could never be at reſt in himſelf, till he had prayed the perſons that he ſuppoſed might take offence would paſs it by. He would be often *complaining* of his

infirmities, it was rare to hear him ſpeaking of his comforts or ſpiritual joys, but he would be very frequent in diſcovering what he found amiſs in himſelf; and many things that are very much ſleighted by others were curiouſly obſerved by him. In one of his letters he expreſſeth himſelf thus, *My unthankfulneſs (beſides my other ſinful infirmities) grieveth me ſore, and I am jealous of myſelf leaſt the fear of the Rod do trouble me more then my grief for ſin.* In another letter he hath this paſſage, *I have found and do find a great difficulty (as in other things, ſo) in this of health, to keep that narrow way of the Lord, for I find by woful experience that I am often ſlipping out either by too much indulgence, or too much ſeverity, which may rather be termed cruelty, the Lord make us wiſe to avoid both theſe extreames.* His great care was to keep himſelf not only from ſuch things as were in themſelves *ſinful* and *unlawful*; but to abſtain from all

all *appearance* of *evil*, and to cut off *occasion* of *offence* from those that might seek it, or be apt to take it. He said he had found by many years experience that the great difficulty that lay upon the Saints, it was in the use of things *lawful* and *indifferent*, and he said, *he had often been unawares overtaken this way sometime by the leading aside of his own corrupt nature which was ever willing to take the largest size, and sometime by the mistaking of others who had misapprehended his intentions and made an evil construction of his actions, yet God hereby had made him more wise and circumspect.* Hereupon he would advise *to forbear a lawful recreation at some time and place, rather, then by the use of our Christian liberty occasion the censures of any that were loose and large walking, though unjustly raised.*

Another thing wherein the eminency of the grace of God in him appeared, was the *Resignation* of himself and all he had to the *will of* His Eminency in Self Resignation.

God, the nature of grace is very much seen in this, which we *will* as God *wills*, and our wills do follow and not *anticipate* the *Divine* and *uncreated will*, this holy man attained a great excellency in this kind; it was his great exercise to pray up his will into a one-ness with the will of God, he observed *it was very incident to our natures to desire to bring down Gods will to ours, but it was much better for us to pray up our wills into his*: when any difficulty lay before him, and his *natural affections* and inclinations would have carried him such a way, His first work was not to pray so much that he might obtain that which nature would desire, but that his will might be brought up to the will of God, and that his Spirit might be brought to an holy indifferency, and the Lord did eminently answer him herein; for before the issue of providence was discovered his will was usually brought up to the will of God, and in

in ſeveral great Caſes and emergencies in his life wherein he was much concerned, he hath been known to ſay, *Touching the iſſue and ſucceſs of ſuch a buſineſs I have received power through grace to acquieſs in the will of God when it is manifeſt.* And as it was his great exerciſe to be much in ſelf-reſignation ſo he made it his endeavour to reſign all he had unto the Lords diſpoſe. After he had heard of the welfare of ſome of his Children, he thus expreſſed himſelf, *And now what thanks can I render to God for you all, only I deſire to give you all up to God that hath given you to me for a time:* His advice alſo to his Children was to follow his example herein, and to give up their neareſt comforts to the Lord *daily.*

His great deſire was to be *ſpiritual* in all he did, and that grace and not nature or fleſhly wiſdom might ſway him in every thing. When a near *Relation* deſired his advice and connſel in a buſineſs of His uprightneſs.

concernment, before he came to give his advice he ſaid, *Oh that I might be wholly ſpiritual that no carnal reſpects might blind mine eyes*, and this was his conſtant courſe, when ever he was ingaged in any difficulty, or to manage any buſineſs wherein he might be much concerned as to the iſſue of it, his firſt care was to mind his duty, and to ſtudy which way *grace* would teach him to act, and his great care was that *grace* might have the principal ſway in all his actions, that ſo it might appear to himſelf and others, that not his *natural affections* or the *principles of fleſhly wiſdom and carnal policy*, but grace and the word of God had led him forth to what he did. He was wont to ſay that *Duty was ours, but the iſſues and ſucceſſes of things belonged to God, we ſhould therefore ſtudy what our own duty was, and leave the iſſue and ſucceſſes of of things to God*. When one had deſired his advice in a buſineſs of im-

importance and great difficulty, he wrote thus, *This one thing let us with inceſſant importunity crave of the Lord, that in this as in all other things he would teach us the way we ſhould go, and that we may walk with God, and follow him fully in the integrity of our hearts, and then leave the ſucceſs on his care who is the only Wiſe and Almighty and our Father.*

His advice was, that in all *Caſes* of *Conſcience* we ſhould ſeek reſolution from the *word*, and in difficult caſes we ſhould ask the counſel of ſome faithful *Miniſter*, For (ſaid he) *the Prieſts lips muſt preſerve knowledge, and we were to enquire the law at his mouth, and God had appointed paſtors and teachers for the perfecting of the Saints*, and for that advice we were to take from godly Miniſters he would ſay, *that which they ſpake out of the Pulpit was to be preferred before that which they ſpake occaſionally and in a more private way of diſcourſe for it was to be*

His advice how to underſtand the mind of God in difficult Caſes.

ſuppoſed that they had conſulted much with God, and had ſtudied and prayed hard for that which they had delivered in publick, and therefore more authority was to be given to it, then to any occaſional or ſudden counſel. He ſaid alſo that for a right underſtanding of the mind of God in *difficult* caſes, the beſt way was to reduce things to their firſt *Original*, and the firſt beginning they had from God, and to look to the firſt foundation of them.

His Deſire to be alwayes in the exerciſe of grace.

His deſire was to be always in the exerciſe of grace, and to mind and attend *preſent duty*: He was much delighted in the ſaying of a godly Miniſter, which afterward he was wont to uſe in his familar diſcourſe that *a Chriſtian ought always to be in duty*; according to this he made it his great ſtudy to conſider what it was that God called him to at preſent, and what the *preſent duty* was that God put him upon. When he went to viſit any, he would conſider what his *call* was

was to go, and what opportunity he might have to do or receive good, and he much bewailed *needleſs and complemental viſits, as things which did eat up and conſume much precious time*; when he uſed any *bodily exerciſe* or lawful recreation, he would do this as duty, becauſe he ſaid it was the will of God we ſhould *preſerve health*, and when he followed his earthly affairs, he would do this *as duty* becauſe he ſaid it is the will of God that we ſhould honour him in a *particular calling*. His great care was to make his *particular calling* ſubſervient to his *general calling*; he would ſtill endeavour to manage and order his *earthly affairs* ſo as that they might not intrench upon the *duties* of *Religion*, nor he be abridged of fit and convenient time for the more immediate ſervice of God.

How natural Religion was become to him.

Religion was become ſo ſpiritually natural to him, that he ſeemed to be wholly turned into it; what ever he did, and ſpake, for the moſt

part, did not only ſavour of grace, but it ſeemed to be wholly guided and acted by grace. Grace ſeemed to have made a perfect conqueſt of *nature*, not but that he had the remnants of the body of death which he complained of as bitterly as any, but grace had ſo great ſway and command in him that there was little elſe but grace appeared to the view of others.

He ſaid, *heretofore when he was carnal he could have wiſhed many of the Commandments razed out of the book of God, but now he found his heart in ſome meaſure made ſutable to the Law.* He thought his heart never in a right temper but when he could *delight* in the ways of God, and would frequently mention that Scripture, *bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his Commandments*: Such was the delight and complacency that he took in the ways of God; and the ſatisfaction that he found in them, that not many

years before his death, he had such a speech as this, which he spake with much solemnity, *If I were sure that as the beast dies, so dies the man, yet would I not chuse to be otherwise then I am.*

Amongst those many graces that he was Eminent for: that which seemed to be most eminent in him was his *Faith* and *living upon Christ*, this was the true root from whence his other great attainments in Christianity did arise. It was the great exercise of his life to go wholly out of himself, and to live wholly upon Christ for all. His most familiar expressions in prayer were such as these, *Take us wholly out of self, and let our whole dependance be upon Christ. Make us one Spirit with Christ, and let us be acted by his Spirit, that so we may not live so much as Christ may live in us. It hath pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell, out of his fulness let us receive grace for grace: Thou hast appointed him to be wis-* His living by Faith on Christ.

dom,

dom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, all in all unto thy people, make him ſo to us. This was his conſtant and moſt familiar language, and as the *Bent* of his Spirit lay moſt this way ſo he accounted this his greateſt perfection. It was a memorable ſpeech that he uſed to ſome that had a great eſteem of him for that ſingular holineſs and ſanctity that they knew to be in him, *The higheſt thing that I have attained unto, it is to go quite and clean out of my ſelf, and to roll my ſelf wholly upon the grace of God in Chriſt.* After all the grace he had attained unto, he accounted it his greateſt perfection to deny himſelf and to live wholly upon Chriſt herein imitating the bleſſed *Apoſtle*, who, after the greateſt meaſures of holineſs that he had attained, yet made it his great deſire to be found in Chriſt. This holy man was ſo curious in this point of living intirely upon Chriſt, as that he never ſuſpected himſelf more, or thought worſe of himſelf, then when he found

found a secret inclination to look to somewhat in himself, and could not find himself so clearly brought off to acts of self-denial. One passage of his was very remarkable to this purpose, *I have been apt to question my condition much of late, because when I have found things amiss within me, and have found out any salve I would be quiet, and did not deny my self fully to rest on the grace of God in Christ.* The great counsel which he would ever be inculcating on his children, it was that they should labour to deny themselves more and more, and study Christ, and learn him more and more. He was scarce ever known to give any holy exhortations to any (in which he was most frequent and abundant) but still he would be sure in the close to admonish them to look to Christ for all grace; and what ever duty he had been exhorting them unto, he would still put them in remembrance that the *grace* and *strength* by which they were to perform

perform this, was to be expected from Christ alone.

His living by Faith on the promises.

And as he was eminent for his living *by faith* on the *Person* of *Christ*, so likewise he was eminent for his living *by faith* on the *Promises*, and resting upon the Lord in all his straits: when he could but take sanctuary in some *promise*, and find out some word of God for his faith to rest upon, he thought himself secure; he was delighted in the mentioning of that passage of *Abraham*, that *Abraham* gave God glory by believing, he thought that the highest way of honouring God it was by trusting of him on his naked word and promise. It is true he was often assaulted by temptations of infidelity (as hath been hinted before) but these were but occasions to make him pray more fervently, and his Faith got the deeper root in the conclusion; the main stream of his prayers in his elder years ran this way, *that he might not stagger at the promise through*

through unbelief, that he might be eſtabliſhed in Faith, and that his Faith might not fail: and the Lord heard him herein, for his Faith held out in its ſtrength to the very laſt, as will appear when we come to relate the paſſages of his death. Whenever he was in any ſtrait or difficulty and knew not which way to turn, the Lord bare up his heart in believing that he would make out his way at laſt, and provide for him ſome way or other. One time having complained to a near Relation of ſome touches of the ſtone and other infirmities that he laboured under: he added, *But the Lord Supports me, in whom I truſt alſo that he will ſupport me.* When he told his friends that he endeavoured to anſwer their deſires in praying for them, he would ſay he did indeed pray for them daily but it was with much weakneſs and infirmity, yet (ſaid he) our truſt is of acceptance in the Lord Jeſus which ſitteth at the right hand of the

the Father and maketh requeſt for us.

His ſingular Humility.

But that which was the Crown and Ornament of his other graces, was his *ſingular humility*. As his grace and experience was extraordinary, ſo he had a more then ordinary meaſure of *humility*. No expreſſion was more familiar with him then that of the *Apoſtle*, accounting himſelf the *chief of Sinners*. There was no corruption that he did oppoſe or ſet himſelf againſt more then *Spiritual Pride*. He would often mention that paſſage of St. *Peter*, *God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble*: when ever he begged any other grace from God, he would ſtill beg *humility* as that which muſt prepare him, and make him capable of receiving that grace. His expreſſions in prayer were ſuch as theſe, *empty us of ſelf, that we may be full with thy fullneſs: that we may receive more grace, make us more humble*. And as he was moſt watchful

ful againſt Spiritual pride in himſelf, ſo he would warn and admoniſh others eſpecially to watch againſt this corruption, *Watch* (ſaid he) *againſt that ſtratagem of Satan, wherewith he uſually aſſaulteth Souls in the growth of Spiritual guifts, which is, to puff them up.* Another time he ſpake to this purpoſe, *As he ſaid, fight not againſt ſmal nor great, but only againſt the King of Iſrael, ſo ſay I, above all fight againſt ſelf and pride.* Writing to a near Relation, he had this expreſſion, *Truly I find in every days ſucceſs the Ebullition of that remainder of Pride in me, and I rejoyce at your ſenſibility of it, and I have you in remembrance as to this very thing I think I may ſay daily.* But as this *holy man* was moſt ſenſible of the ſtirring of Pride in himſelf, ſo by his long and daily praying and ſtriving againſt it, he got ſo great a victory over it, that others that beheld him never ſaw *greater demonſtrations* of humility then in him. He was

was never known to boaſt of his own excellencies, but he would often ſpake of his infirmities, that ſo, as he ſaid, *God might have the more glory, and himſelf ſhame.* When he ſpeak for God, or in the cauſe of God, he would ſpake with as great Majeſty and authority as ever any of ſo private a capacity as he was, was known to do; when he ſpake of any thing relating to himſelf, he would ſtill abaſe himſelf and manifeſt the greateſt lowlineſs of mind and ſelf-denial; and he loved not that others ſhould think too highly of him: To one that had a great eſteem of him for that grace of God that did ſo eminently appear in him, he wrote thus, *Think of me no otherwiſe then you ſee: only I hope I have obtained mercy to be faithful.*

The Love he had to the glory of God.

He was very curious in this to *arrogate* nothing to himſelf; his great care was to put off all from himſelf, and to attribute all to the free grace of God, as St. *Pauls* expreſſion

preſſion was, *not I, but the grace of God in me.* So when he was carried out to any ſpecial or eminent exerciſe of grace, he would ſtill expreſs himſelf to this ſort, *I have received grace* to do this or that duty, or to believe this or that particular promiſe: And it was one of his familiar ſayings, *let us remember to expect all from him, and aſcribe all to him.* When he had heard of the grace of God in others, he would rejoyce much in it, and in this he had a peculiar excellency, he was never obſerved to envy the gifts or grace of any, but rejoyced exceedingly to hear of the graces of others, and bleſſed the Lord for the grace beſtowed upon others as well as that which was given to himſelf: He loved Holineſs for Holineſs ſake, and therefore when he ſaw it in any, he rejoyced in it as much as if it had been in himſelf. When he had heard of the grace of God beſtown upon ſome, *he ſaid, bleſſed be the Lord for ever and*

and ever, who are we that we ſhould be able to will any thing after this ſort, the Lord keep it in the purpoſe of our hearts for ever, and prepare our hearts to him. The great thing which he begged of God for himſelf and his neareſt Relations, was that God would make uſe of him and them ſome way to be ſerviceable to him whilſt they lived, and he ſaid, *one thing more have I begged of God and ſhall beg, that both me and you and all that receive the benefit may look up and give God alone all the glory.* Herein lay the perfection of his grace (and that wherein he came neareſt to the holineſs of the Saints in heaven) that although he deſired to be moſt ſerviceable and to be carried forth in the higheſt way of exerciſing grace, yet when all was done, he deſired not that he might be eyed or looked upon the more, but his great deſire was that all that was done by him might be ſeen to be of God, and that he might be admired the more.

more. Writing to a near Relation, he had this paſſage, *I pray that God will make uſe of my ſelf and you in ſuch a way, as that God alone may be ſeen and we not taken notice of at all, that he may have the glory and we may not be ſeen.* It was a mighty rejoycing to him to ſee Religion honoured and to hear of any paſſage of providence that made for the *credit* or *honour* of Religion. When there was an old diſciple an ancient Chriſtian that had profeſſed Religion many years dyed, and had held out in his profeſſion to the end without any ſtain upon his converſation, he ſeemed to be tranſported with an extraordinary joy, and could hardly ſpeak of it without tears, *Oh* (ſaid he) *ſuch a one hath left no ſtain behind him.*

The great Senſe he had of Gods Diſpenſations towards the Land.

He was conſtantly affected with a great ſenſe of Gods diſpenſations towards the Land; if there were any ſigns of Gods diſpleaſure, and the *Judgments* of God ſeemed to be approaching, or elſe the *Land* lay

lay under *Judgments* at the present; his manner still was to humble himself in a more then ordinary manner, and to stir up himself to pray with more fervency. And he was wont to say he loved to look above the *Instruments*, and the second *Causes*, and to *transact* all things between God and him, and to consider what it was that God aimed at in every dispensation. In the time of the late troubles he wrote to a near Relation 'to this effect, We had here 'with us as loud *Thunder* as I re- 'member ever to have heard; our 'house in which I was did shake: the 'Lightning also then was extraor- 'dinary, such as I never saw in 'all my life; I stood to behold 'how it came forth at the breaking 'of the Clouds, and I saw (and so 'did many others with me) that 'out of the midst of the Lightning 'there came forth divers times the 'likeness of fresh burning coales 'of fire, so redand sparkling as any hot

'hot Iron can be when it is heated
'to the utmoſt in the Smiths Forge.
'Theſe Signs from heaven with the
'Sword drawn out on earth a-
'mong us, do ſeem to ſpeak alowd
'that our provocations are very
'great: Joyn with us to intreat the
'Lord for pardon and reformation:
'Stir up your godly friends to do
'the like. It may be the Lord will
'hear and ſpare, becauſe he warns,
'or it may be ſuch ſeekers may be
'hid or marked out from the com-
'mon deſtruction, or if the outward
'man periſh, ſure I am, the ſoul
'ſhall find mercy that ſeeks the
'Lord in truth, He will in no wiſe
'caſt out ſuch a Soul.

In another Letter he wrote thus,
'at ſuch a time fell abundance of
'rain, and the waters were ſo high
'as hath been ſeldom ſeen; many
'mens harveſt is yet behind, and
'great loſs likely to enſue, our
'heavenly Father ſhakes the rod
'of Famine as he hath of the
'Sword: Oh let us pray that

'grace

'grace may turn all of us that are 'his from our Iniquities.

In another letter ſpeaking concerning the troubles and publick diſtractions that were in the *Land*, he expreſſed himſelf thus, 'Methinks 'the voice of the Goſpel conſidered 'with the uncertainty of all things 'here below, doth ſeem to put us 'moſt ſeriouſly to reſolve upon the 'ſetting of our affections on things 'above; I hope it is our reſolution 'with yours: But yet I think we 'and you need more firmneſs in re-'ſolution, elſe why ſhould our 'wiſe heavenly Father hold us at 'ſuch uncertainties, if he did not 'ſee this to be beſt for us.

In another letter ſpeaking of the publick troubles, he had this expreſſion, *I believe that one end of our troubles may be to keep us up in a fervent frame of praying, that we may pray up our ſelves more and more into that heaven-like converſation in which the ancient Saints have been inabled to out-live their troubles, and*

ſo

ſo I truſt ſhall we. Theſe few inſtances (amongſt many more that might be produced) are brought to ſhew how ſenſible he was of Gods diſpenſations towards the Land, and of publick Judgments, and what his carriage was under them.

His ſoundneſs in the Faith.

He was a man of a *ſound Judgment*, and moſt ſtable in the Faith, inſomuch, that though he had been a profeſſor of Religion for many years, and lived in ſuch a time wherein ſo many opinions ſprang up; he never took up, much leſs was fond of any private, particular, or *novel opinion*, but he always preferred the old *Divinity* (as he call'd it) and liked that doctrine beſt which he knew to be held and maintained by the generality of godly, ſober, and *Orthodox Diviner.* Where he perceived any were led aſide into any erroneous or corrupt principle, by the ſubtilty of Satan and their own weak Judgment; he would pray with great com-

passion and tenderness for their reduction and recovery: and herein he was very eminent: instead of censuring others, or quarreling with them about their opinions, he did *Conscientiously* set himself to pray for them, and as he had opportunity, would endeavour in the *Spirit of meekness*, by setting before them the clearest and plainest texts of Scripture that were opposite to their opinions, to inform them in the truth. And being sensible how much the work of Christ was hindered by the falling away of many that had newly taken up the profession of Religion, to vain opinions, his prayers ran much that way that the Lord would please to *reduce wandring Souls*, and he would exhort others to do the like. *Oh*, (says he) *let us be earnest with our God to stablish us and ours and all his people in the truth of the Gospel.*

His Charity

His *Charity* towards others was exceeding *exemplary* where he saw any

any thing of Christ or sincerity though mixed with some errors in Judgment, and accompanied with other infirmities, his Charity would pass over those defects, and imbrace that of the grace of God which he apprehended to be in them. He always loved to make the best construction of the actions of others, and if the action of an other could possibly admit of a good interpretation he would be sure to construe it in that sense. It was a rule with him, *never to speak of the faults and failings of others behind their backs, except it were in these two cases, either that it might some way or other tend to the persons reformation, or else to warn others to take heed of such a one that might do them a mischief.* And as he laid a Law upon himself never to speak of the failings of others for discourse sake, but only upon a weighty occasion and for a good end, so he could not patiently endure to hear an evil report concerning others, and it

was the moſt unpleaſing diſcourſe to him to hear the infirmities of others blazoned without a cauſe. He was moſt ready to diſtribute to the neceſſities of ſuch as were in want to his power, and many times beyond his power: His houſe was free and open at all times for the entertainment of *godly Miniſters*, and other *godly Perſons* that came to viſit him; he was a lover of *Hoſpitality*, and ſpent a great part of his eſtate that way. There were few weeks that paſſed wherein his houſe was not a receptable to lodge and entertain ſome godly perſon or other. And none was ever known to be more free, hearty and ingenious in the entertainment and reſpect which he gave to others, whether they were his familiar friends or ſtrangers, the love and courteſie he ſhewed to others, it was truly ſuch as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks of, and requires to be in us, *Love without diſſimulation.* What he did in this way of friendſhip and enter-

entertainment, it was with so much freedom, chearfulness, and openness of heart as that all those unto whom he shewed any kindness might easily perceive that what kindness he shewed it was done with all his heart, and he seem'd to rejoyce that he had an opportunity of expressing kindness to them. He did Conscienciously set apart some portion of his estate every year for *Pious uses*, some part of which he gave to godly *Ministers*, another part he spent in an yearly allowance that he afforded to some young students at the *University*, and another part of it was given to such as were poor and necessitous, as providence gave occasion: besides this the doors of his house were a constant relief to the poor of the place where he lived, which were very numerous.

In his dealings with men he was most *exact* and *just*, he would rather injure himself, and part with his own right rather then do the least

His exactness as to moral Righteousness.

leaſt wrong to any. When he drew near his end, having been intruſted with the imployment of conſiderable ſummes of money that belonged to ſeveral perſons, his great care was to diſpoſe of things ſo, and to put every thing into ſuch an exact method and order, as that every one might have his own, and none might receive the leaſt wrong or prejudice, and this he did to the general ſatisfaction of all.

What courſe he took in making up differences.

When perſons came to complain to him of their *diſſentions*, and the breaches that were between them and others, he would exhort them *firſt* of all to make their peace with God, and to labour to ſet all things right between God and them, and then he ſaid, God could quickly turn the hearts of enemies and make them friends; and upon this occaſion he would often mind them of that Scripture, *if a mans ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh his Enemies to be at peace with*

with him. His integrity and uprightneſs was ſuch, and he had the reputation of a man ſo unbyaſſed, and that would not be drawn to favour either party more then the juſtice and equity of the cauſe did require, that both the diſſenting parties would refer the matter to him, and the whole buſineſs was left to his ſingle determination, and what concluſion and agreement he brought things unto they were content withal and did yeild to ſtand to it: And his manner was (when he came to make up differences) oftentimes to begin with prayer: And being once called to make up a difference between ſome near relations, he made a motion that they might firſt begin with prayer, before they entered upon the diſcourſe, but this being refuſed, and one of the perſons there preſent diſcovering his unwillingneſs to imbrace that motion, he ſoon took his leave, and ſaid to a friend that came with him, Oh, we ſhall

be able to do no good in it. And in making up of differences his care was not only to bring the disſenting parties to terms of agreement, but his endeavour alſo was to make the perſons themſelves friends, and to remove any exaſperation or bitterneſs that was between them, that ſo they might continue in love and amity for the future; and he had a wonderful dexterity and ability to uſe proper and fit arguments taken from the Laws of the Land on one hand, and from the Laws of God on the other, to preſs them to come to terms of agreement; ſuch was his Love of peace, and his deſire to make peace between others, that when it hath been a matter of coſt, and ſomething hath been to be paid by one of the parties for the ſatisfaction of the other, and the party that ſhould have paid the mony hath diſcovered his unwillingneſs to pay it, rather then the breach ſhould not be made up, or the difference

ence remain between them, he hath paid the mony out of his own purſe.

He had often times mony put into his hands by godly perſons to diſpoſe as he ſaw cauſe, and when ſome poor people (who were made acquainted with it) would come to him for relief, he would be ſure to give them ſome *ſpiritual alms* before he diſtributed thoſe corporal *Alms* that were committed to him, his manner was to be dropping ſome holy counſel upon them, and to be acquainting them with the knowledg of Chriſt, and if there were any notorious or ſcandalous ſin that they were guilty of, he would endeavour to make them ſenſible of it and to bring them to repentance for the ſame. His manner in diſpenſing Alms.

He was a great promoter, upholder, and incourager of the meetings of the godly, *namely*, ſuch as were for *prayer*, *holy conference*, and ſuch as tended meerly to *ſpiritual edification*. As for meetings to any other end; eſpecially ſuch His promoting Chriſtian meetings tending to edification.

wherein any profeſſing Religion did ingage themſelves about *State-affairs* to ſpeak and diſcourſe about them (which he upon all occaſions would declare againſt, and ſay that private Chriſtians had nothing to do with them) or ſuch meetings as were ſpent in talking and diſcourſing of opinions and controverted points, or thoſe wherein the time was ſpent meerly in a vain oſtentation of mens own parts and guifts, and the ſpiritual good and edification of others not aimed at; he was an utter enemy to ſuch kind of meetings, & none was more averſe from them. This appeared by the caution which he uſed in ſetting down the Rules for the ordering and regulating of ſuch Chriſtian meetings in which he would be preſent. When firſt he began to ſet up this way of *Chriſtian Meetings* in the Town where he lived, ſome godly perſons were offended, fearing leſt ſuch a meeting might be the occaſion for the venting

ing and ſpreading of errors, which were too riſe at that time, and that it might be a means to take off perſons from their love to, and eſteem of the Publick Miniſtry; hereupon Mr. *Rowe*, to ſhew the innocency and harmleſneſs of his intentions, and the intention of thoſe that were with him; drew up a paper to ſhew what his ends were in thoſe meetings: the Paper written with his own hand was as follows,

Private meetings of Chriſtians for the glory of God, in furthering the publick Goſpel-Ordinances; ſhould be,

Not in the time of publick ordinances.

Nor to the hinderance of Family-Duties:

Nor in places, nor with perſons of evil Report.

Nor to the hinderance of mens particular Callings.

Nor by night or other times ſuſpected.

Nor

Nor for Controverſies of Diſputations.

But for the clearing and ſetting home of truth received in the publick Miniſtry, and in clearing Caſes of Conſcience ariſing thereupon, or otherwiſe: And in ſuch exhortations, admonitions, counſels, conſolations, as conduce thereunto, or are otherwiſe neceſſary.

In ſome convenient time of the day, for an hour or two at the moſt, and once in a week at the moſt, except in ſome urgent caſe.

In ſome Family of good report, and among perſons of good report.

Each one preſent having Liberty to ſpeak one by one; to begin and end with prayer for a bleſſing.

That the Miniſter of the place or ſome other approved Miniſter be deſired to be preſent.

Then preſently to depart each one to his place and duty, and to walk ſutably, that the way of God be not evil ſpoken of.

This

This Paper was enough to ſatisfie all ingenious and unprejudiced perſons; and whereas it was feared that theſe *Meetings* might have been an occaſion for the ſpreading of *Errors*, the contrary effect was found, for by this means, the godly of that place where theſe meetings were held, were kept ſtedfaſt in the Faith. And this aroſe much from the wiſdom which God had endowed Mr. *Rowe* withal; for his prudence was ſuch in managing of thoſe meetings, as that the time which they ſpent together in them, was taken up, for the moſt part (excepting only what time was ſpent in prayer) in diſcourſing of ſome main *Article* of *Religion*, or ſome *Catecheticall* point. And by this means, the *Chriſtians* of that place were ſo rooted and grounded in the Faith, as that they were not ſo ſoon ſhaken by temptations, as many others were in other parts of the Nation, who had not the principles of *Religion* ſo much diſtilled into

into them, nor rendred ſo familiar to them.

The great conjunction of the graces of the Spirit in him.

To all that which hath been already ſaid, this is to be added, as that which did moſt of all commend and ſet forth the *Grace* of God in him and towards him. He did not only attain an eminency in this or that grace, or ſome few particular Graces, but he arrived to a great eminency in every grace, ſo that as there was no grace but it was very *viſible*, and might be clearly *ſeen* and *diſcerned* to be in him, ſo there was not one of theſe graces but he ſeemed to excel therein, *Holy affection* and a *ſpiritual fervor* in prayer and other acts of worſhip, *zeal* for the glory of God, *faith*, *humility*, *meekneſs*, *patience*, *ſubmiſſion to the will of God*, *heavenly-mindedneſs*, *charity and compaſſion* to others, and the like *graces*, were not only to be found in him, as they are more or leſs to be found in all the Saints, but they were elevated to a greater height, and brought

brought up to a greater and more peculiar eminency that is commonly found in moſt Chriſtians, and there was ſuch a ſpecial eminency in every grace as that it was hard to ſay which grace it was that he moſt excelled in.

His bringing forth more fruit in his age.

Having thus *walked* with God many years, he kept his *integrity* to the end; and that which was moſt remarkable, in his elder years, he ſeemed to excel himſelf; he did not only retain the luſtre of his former graces, but he grew more *ſpiritual*, and was more *active* and *lively* in the ways of God: he ſpent more time in *Prayer*, *meditation*, and other holy exerciſes, he was more abundant in holy *counſells* and *exhortations*. And this was one of his ſpeeches, *Since our time is ſhort, let us work the faſter, and watch and pray the more fervently: Bleſſed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments.* He ſeemed to mind little elſe but ſpiritual concernments; *grace* ſeemed to have the whole command

mand of him. Being asked by one of his Relations, that whereas in his younger years he seemed to be more inclined to passion and perturbation, and was sooner moved when those that were under him had not given him due observance, and done things according to his mind and expectation, how it came to pass that now in his elder years he was more meek and patient, and seemed to be little moved at any thing; he answered, it was not because he found not the same things in his nature still: and that he found himself more inclined to passion then before; but that the grace of God had now overcome and overpowred him, and reduced him to the temper that he was in.

His expectation and longing after his change

He had a long and a constant remembrance of his change before it came: And hereinhe was most like the *antient saints*, he accounted himself but a *Pilgrim* and *Stranger* upon Earth. Several years before his death

death, there was ſcarce a Letter that he wrote to ſome of his neareſt Relations, but he expreſſed the ſenſe he had of his approaching change. In one of his Letters he expreſſed himſelf thus, *our time of departure hence draweth neer: Oh pray for us as we deſire to do for you, that we may be found blameleſs at that day.* In another letter (after he had been ſick) he ſaid, *Pray for me that I may not be taken hence unready, nor yet my life be longer deſired then all Gods work in me, and by me be done.* A year or two before his death he rejoyced much to think that ſo much of his race was run; and expreſſed himſelf to this purpoſe, that he would not for a great deal be *ſet back*, and have thoſe years to live again, that he had already paſſed over. Some five or ſix weeks before his laſt ſickneſs whereof he died, he thus expreſſed himſelf, *I am old* (as Iſaack ſaid) *and know not the day of my death, pray for me that I may be faithful to the death.*

About

His laſt Sickneſs.

About the begining of *December* 1659. he fell ſick of a lingring diſtemper, which continued upon him for the ſpace of *ten weeks*, before the Lord was pleaſed to put a period to his race.

The Intimation he had concerning his change

In the beginning of his ſickneſs he had ſome intimation from the Lord concerning his *change*: and as there was no *eminent thing* that befell him in his courſe, but he had uſually ſome hint before from the Lord concerning it; So the Lord the better to prepare him for it, had faſtned the impreſſion of his change upon him before it came: When the *Miniſter* of the place where he lived came to viſit him, and ſaid he hoped he might recover, he replied, *he knew not how God might deal with him, but he had received the ſentence of death in himſelf.* A little after the beginning of his ſickneſs, he wrote to ſome of his near Relations, *Beloved in the Lord, I am yet thorough mercy alive; and continue ſick; my God dealeth bountitifully*

fully with me: who do acknowledge from my heart that I am a chief of ſinners, yet hath he pardoned me, and will (ere long) receive me to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all: Pray for me that I may give God his due glory by believing, and by holy ſubmiſſion and conformity to his will in life and death: Bleſſed be God I have in my weak meaſure ſet my houſe in order. &c.

His unwearied-neſs in the Lords work to the laſt.

As long as ever he was able, he continued praying with his family, and ſpeaking to them ſomething out of the word; and when he found his ſpirits ſo low, and ſo much ſpent, that he was not able to do as much as he had done formerly, he ſaid it was *the grief of his Soul that he could do no more for them.*

His exemplary carriage at his death.

His whole carriage during his *ſickneſs*, and at his *death*, it was ſuitable to his life, as he had lived *exemplarily*, ſo he died *exemplarily*. The whole of his carriage at his death was, as one (who was an eye witneſs

witneſs of it, and was a judicious perſon) xpreſſed it, asif it had been a *ſtudied peece*, his great care was that grace might be ſeen to act him at his death, as his chief care had been to expreſs it in his Life. He was naturally a man of a *timerous* and *fearful Spirit*, but when he came to die, the grace of God had ſo elevated him above his natural temper: that he was not only willing to die, but he triumphed over death, and was no more concerned about it, then only, that grace might act him at his death, as it had done in his life. He delighted not to ſpeak much in the time of his ſickneſs; but for the moſt part his time was taken up in a *continued Meditation*, yet ſomething he ſpake to all that came to viſit him, and that which he ſpake, it was uſually comprized in ſome ſhort ſentence or other. His moſt uſual word to all that came to him was this, *make ſure of Chriſt, remember that one neceſſary thing*. At one time

His Dying Speeches and Counſels.

time when ſome of the younger ſort were come about him, he ſaid, *make ſure of Chriſt; and for incouragement, I tell you that Religion is no vain thing, it is no notion, it is a reality, I tell you ſo from mine own experience.* Another time perceiving ſome young ones to be talking one to another in a familiar manner, he ſaid, *he knew not what they were talking about, but commended their love, only they ſhould be ſure to ſpeak ſomething for the edifying one of another, and they ſhould have their ſpeech ſeaſoned with the ſalt of the word, for the Lord he hearkned and heard, and there was a Book of remembrance written for them that feared him and thought upon his name.* At another time when there was a perſon of *Quality* came to viſit him, he ſaid, *hold on as you have begun, make ſure of Chriſt, if I had as much gold as would reach up to the ſky, it would do me no good; my intereſt in Chriſt is all my happineſs.* Another time his wife and children

children coming about him, he ſaid, *I hope you have made choice of Chriſt*; and he exhorted them to *cleave to him*, withall he added, they ſhould be *diligent in the uſe of all the means, but when all was done, they ſhould be ſure to depend upon Chriſt*: and he added farther, *take heed of the world, for that is your greateſt Enemy; I have found it to be ſo.* And to his children in particular, he ſaid, *deny your ſelves, ſinful-ſelf, ſelf-pleaſure, and ſelf-profit, and the delights of the world; and ſeek your All in Chriſt, and in him you ſhall find All-ſufficiency.* When ſome good people (who were wont to meet together to pray, and to build up one another in the ways of God) came to viſit him, he ſaid, *continue in prayer, hold on, I am confident it is the way of God you are in.* To the Miniſter of the place that came to viſit him often in his ſickneſs, he ſaid, *Preach to win ſouls, let all your preaching be to win ſouls.* And to his own Son,

Son, a little before his death, he wrote to this purpoſe, my Son, *take heed to the Miniſtry that thou haſt received in the Lord that thou fulfil it, this will tend to the glory of God, the good of ſouls, and to thine account in the day of Chriſt, the great Shepherd of the ſheep.* During the time of his ſickneſs, ſome of his Chriſtian friends kept a *Faſt* for him, as alſo in relation to publick concernments, and ſome being going from him to that exerciſe, he ſaid, *Pray for me, but eſpecially for the Church of God.*

The inward Peace and ſpiritual Comforts which he had in his Sickneſs.

All the time of his *ſickneſs* he had not the *leaſt cloud* upon his Spirit, neither was Satan permitted in the leaſt to diſturb his peace, when a Miniſter that came to viſit him, asked him whether he had any temptations, he anſwered, *No*, bleſſed be the Lord he had *none*, ſo that although, all his life time, he had been full of conflicts, yet when he came to die he had the moſt perfect *ſerenity*: after he had been ſick

ſick ſome weeks, he wrote thus to a near Relation, *I yet live thorough mercy, and do continue weak, but God dealeth very gently with me; for my outward afflictions are tolerable, and his inward conſolations are full of grace and heavenly ſweetneſs.* Theſe comforts abode and continued with him to the very laſt, for at ſeveral times in his ſickneſs, and the ſame day that he died he was heard to ſay, *he hath left with me the Comforter*: and when, about an hour before he died, his *natural Spirits* being almoſt ſpent, he brake forth into this expreſſion, *my grief is great*, one of his Relations ſtanding by, ſaid to him, you do not mean in reſpect of your *ſpiritual eſtate*; Mr. *Rowe* replied with a little *ſeeming diſpleaſure, No, no, he hath, and doth, and will ſupport by his eternal Spirit.* Thus the Lord was pleaſed to anſwer him in that which had been his great deſire for a long time, which was, that his *Faith* might not fail, and that

that he might be kept up in the Faith to the laſt. The night before he died, he had this expreſſion, *I have waited upon God for my ſalvation, and bleſſed be God, I ſhall not be diſappointed.*

His Conſtancy in ſelf-denial

As his manner was in his life time, ſo it was obſerved by thoſe that were moſt about him at his death; He was much in the acknowledgment of his own *nothingneſs* and *vileneſs*; and much in magnifying the *free grace* & *mercy* of God towards him. The Miniſter that preached at his *Funeral* had this paſſage concerning him. He was much in *ſelf denial* even to the laſt, looking on all that he had done as nothing, as *droſs* and *dung*, in compariſon of *Chriſt*. At one time when his wife came to him and ſaid, ſhe prayed that ſhe might *follow his ſteps*: he replied, *Follow Chriſt, follow Chriſt, he hath given you an example: Bleſſed be God for friends, but bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt who hath ſaved us from wrath to come.*

His Constancy in self-resignation.

His great desire was to be perfectly *resigned* up to the will of God, and therefore his great request to his friends when they came to visit him was this, *Pray me up into the will of God*; and to some of his near Relations during the time of his sickness he wrote thus, *Pray for me and your selves, that we may be taught and made able by the Spirit of Christ in us, to resign and conform to our Fathers good will, that when Gods time is come, I may depart in peace unto that longed for everlasting Rest, which the Lord Jesus hath purchased for me, and to which he will bring me; even so Amen.* And in another letter he wrote thus, *I desire your prayers for me whilst I live, that I may abide stedfast in the Faith of the Lord Jesus, whose I am, and by whom alone I expect salvation, and that I may by Faith in the Lord Jesus, have power from him, by his Spirit, to submit and conform to his will both in life and death.* In the time of his sickness he was full of holy *ejaculations*

His Solliloquies

culations and *Soliloquies*; He had often that paſſage of *Hezekiah*, *I am oppreſſed, Lord undertake for me.* And that paſſage of *David*, *in the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my Soul*: He would often cauſe the 16. *Pſalm*, and the 26. of *Iſaiah*, the ſix firſt verſes, to be read to him; and ſpeaking to himſelf alone, he would often repeat theſe words, Iſa. 12. 2. *The Lord Jehovah is my Strength and my Song, he alſo is become my ſalvation.* Sometimes he would ſay *Come Lord Jeſus*, and then he would anſwer himſelf, *Yea, he doth come, he comes leaping over the Mountains, and skipping over the Hills.*

The great thing which comforted him, was, to think, he ſhould be *immediately with the Lord*, as ſoon as his race was at an end. When a Chriſtian friend that came to viſit him, uſed ſuch an expreſſion, in diſcourſe, as this, *that the Bodies of the Saints ſhould reſt in their Graves, as in a bed of Down*: *Yea, but* (ſays he)

this day thou ſhalt be with me in Paradiſe : Intimating thus much, that though it were matter of joy to him, to think that his body ſhould reſt in *Peace* until the general Reſurrection ; yet his greateſt comfort lay in this, to think that at the inſtant of diſſolution, his ſoul ſhould go to the *immediate* ſight of God. This appeared in the many ardent breathings, which he had in ſuch expreſſions as theſe, *Come Lord Jeſus ; Oh how doth my ſoul thirſt for God :* And again he would ſay, *Go forth my ſoul to meet thy God.*

He was not only willing to die, but he *longed* to be *diſſolved*, and to *be with Chriſt.* The laſt Sabbath but one before his death, he ſaid, *Oh what a bleſſed Sabbath would this be, if this might be my entrance into my everlaſting Sabbath.* At another time he ſaid, *Why ſhould we not be willing to die, Chriſt came from heaven to earth, to free us from ſin and miſery, and why ſhould not we be willing*

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